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THE  
ADVENTURE BEAUTIFUL

BY  
LILIAN WHITING

“Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty;  
they shall behold the land that is very far off.”



BOSTON  
LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY  
1917

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INSCRIBED TO

ÉLISE EMMONS

(in the beloved and unfading memory of her mother)

MARY (CROW) EMMONS

whose wonderful life of beneficent loveliness was that of  
one —

“ . . . who needed not  
The changing of her sphere  
To give to heaven a Shining One  
Who walked an angel here ” ;

and with remembrances of our Italian days in those “lands  
of summer beside the sea”, where, lingering amid the purple  
shadows of the Campagna Mystica, in all that spell of inef-  
fable beauty, we held sweet converse of the life that now is  
and that which is to come.

LILIAN WHITING.

THE BRUNSWICK, BOSTON, U. S. A.,  
June, 1917.



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“The delusion of death shall pass;  
The delusion of mounded earth, the apparent withdrawal;  
Ye shall shed your bodies and upward flutter to freedom.”

—STEPHEN PHILLIPS.

From “Midnight, 1900.”



# THE ADVENTURE BEAUTIFUL

## CHAPTER I

### THE ADVENTURE BEAUTIFUL

“Why fear death? Death is the most beautiful adventure in life!”

CHARLES FROHMAN.

“To them who, by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life.”

ROMANS, ii, 7.

THE continuity of life, unbroken by that change we call death, has become a more immediate question of the hour than ever before in all human history. The tragic war that is engulfing almost the entire civilized world imparts to this question an eager and vital interest unparalleled throughout past centuries. Does the increasing Expansion of Religion include the recognition, not only of the persistence of personality, but of the affirmation that there is no

absolute separation between the dead and the living; that those whom we call the dead have only passed to a larger and fuller life; that the two realms of the Seen and the Unseen are really corresponding environments, in natural sequence, and that the former and more generally held ideas of death are a misconception of its real nature? Does science, in revealing to us the reality of an unseen universe interpenetrated with the visible one, provide room for a more extended investigation of spiritual truth? For if this continuity of life and an uninterrupted spiritual companionship between those who vanish from mortal sight and those who remain here is a fact, a truth capable of being demonstrated, it becomes perhaps the most important revelation in the evolutionary progress of humanity. The increasing expansion of religion would include a re-interpretation of life, and an entire discarding of much that has made for gloom and sorrow if this were true. Death has been held to be the one supreme sorrow from which no one could be exempt. Have we, therefore, been somewhat wandering in delusion; have we been somewhat blind, deaf, and unresponsive to a profounder reality of truth

on which a more constructive philosophy may be rationally based? Are we not, as a matter of fact, living in a universe of untold love and wisdom and illumination, from before which all shadows shall flee away?

Many intimations appear to indicate that we are on the verge — not of hopeless ruin, chaos, and disaster; of calamity unprecedented in all the conflicts recorded in history; but rather that through conflict we are emerging into new and finer conditions; into the Blessed Order. This signifies an increasing and ever-deepening spirituality. The continuity of life implies the uninterrupted spiritual companionship between those in the Unseen and those still here, and sustains the truth expressed in Browning's line,

No work begun shall ever pause for death !

This unbroken companionship of thought not infrequently manifests itself in certain phenomena; in direct communication through some form of physical means, as is more or less familiar to all in this age of psychical research and psychic demonstration. The most satisfying communion with friends who have passed beyond mortal ken is in that subtle and unmistak-

able companionship of spirit which will become increasingly recognizable with the increasing spiritualization of humanity. It is the lifting up of the heart, the opening of the spirit to spiritual realities. It is the ultimate state to which man, in his onward advancement, shall come. All the psychical phenomena, whose records are continuous from the experiences of Elijah to the present time, are but a means to an end, and that end is the education of the spirit. These phenomena have appealed to the physical senses because the spiritual powers of man are largely undeveloped. The expansion of religion implies the recognition of these higher and latent powers. The expansion of religion provides for the new discoveries as to the very nature of life; the origin, the development, the destiny of the soul. It provides the true channel for new readings of experience. All the nobler possibilities of man's life are included in his religious life, and organized religion must always continue to correspond with the constant unfoldment of the spirit, and to assimilate into itself and teach through the church all the new truth it thus gains. Religion no more stands still than does science. Neither can be viewed as

a finality, but rather as an organized body of truth always hospitable to new truth; always amenable to larger outlooks and to discoveries that may modify or may discard views and beliefs before held. To regard religion as synonymous with theology is to involve it — if not one's self — in a maze of bewilderment. Theology may consist of doctrines, but religion consists of life. It finds its true expression in feeding the hungry, in clothing the destitute, in tender compassion and untiring aid to the suffering and the helpless, in providing opportunities and opening privileges to humanity. Religion, in its deepest sense, is at this time more nearly allied with economics than it is with theological dogma. How swift and eager the churches are to recognize and to incorporate into action this truth is seen in their manifold practical utilities. The church has become institutional. Its varied and manifold activities, applying religion to human needs, would require a volume to themselves for adequate allusion. If it were ever true that professing Christians conceived of their duties as beginning and ending and wholly comprised in attendance upon the offices of religious worship, it is no longer true. These offices of devotion are to unlock

reservoirs of divine energy, to release stores of power to be applied to human need. The stimulus of the services on Sunday finds expression on Monday in the gathering of women of the parish to prepare garments for the helpless, to give out work to the unemployed, and in various other channels of action. The clergy are the beneficent helpers in every locality in which they dwell. The true aspect of the church is regarded as Sanctuary, where the worshiper, the communicant, seeks, and finds, and bears away with him the never-failing help of God to be applied to all his tasks and duties. The idle talk of "outgrowing" the Christian church is too empty for even the dignity of negation. When humanity has grown to its beautiful and its sublime requirements, — in whatever sect or form of all its various sects and forms, each offering its measure of divine truth, — when humanity has grown fully commensurate with these things may be a more rational time to discuss outgrowing them. As for the church, far from its being in any decadence, never was it, in the universal sense, so abundantly appreciated as at this present time, when humanity is feeling the renewal of a deeper and more spiritual impulse. Organized religion



furnishes the atmosphere that nurtures all that makes for the higher life. The church is not perfect; humanity is not perfect; but in mutual help and hope are clergy and people working together for a common end. Religion is increasingly a joyous realization that pervades all the planes of our daily living. The offices of the church re-charge the spirit with divine energy. To this expansion of religious thought and purpose many modern movements have contributed. Theosophy, Christian Science, New Thought, extensions of ethical study or speculation in many directions, all find their place. These movements are manifestations of spiritual vitality. Under various forms, the essential spirit pervades each and all. The movement known as Spiritualism is, in its highest interpretation, inseparably connected with religious life. Its earliest records are to be sought in the Bible. In its more inclusive sense it has to do with a certain order of phenomena of various forms of manifestation. The facts of many of these, as clairvoyance, clairaudience, automatic writing, and also much striking physical phenomena are as well attested as are facts in chemistry or astronomy. The interpretation of these facts is still in its experi-

mental stages. If it is objected that if God had intended man to know anything of the life beyond and our present relation to it He would have revealed it to us, the answer may be that to an extent He has revealed it to us in the Bible, which is a very repository of records of psychic phenomena; and also that the same objection might be applied to any branch of science. Man gains knowledge of the sidereal universe by exhaustive study; by the invention and use of the telescope, the spectroscope, and other apparatus. He gains knowledge of chemical truth by laboratory experiment and study. It would hardly be more extravagant to say that if God had intended man to live in houses, He would have created houses. These phenomena have to do with more searching and authoritative psychological accounts of the potential nature of man than had heretofore been tabulated. The world with which science is chiefly concerned is the world of unseen potencies. Physical science deals with atoms, molecules, electrons — but who ever saw one of these? We know that intense and universal power of electricity only in its effects. Who ever saw electricity? When Newton discovered gravitation it was by mental, not by physical vision.

The entire world that we see is nothing in comparison to the world that we do not see. Nor, in fact, were it not for the invisible and the immaterial realm, would that of the visible and the material endure for an hour. Were the portals opening into the ethereal closed, the world as we know it would cease to exist.

A spiritual epoch is now upon the world, a period in which the higher powers of man are manifesting their struggle for unfoldment. In a book privately published in the autumn of 1913 by a group of mystics in Bristol, England, whose contents consist of personal messages and monitions received by this group, a paragraph appears which reads thus :

In 1914 there will be a great inrush of souls into the Light, and a great down-rush of spirit power and life, also a mighty rising like a tidal wave. These two forces will meet in the Unseen World, and will cause a great breaking up of former things. For until old things are broken up there is no room for the new. This will be the climax of the Great Tribulation, after which oil will be poured on the troubled waters and there will be a great calm.

The book appeared some nine months before the opening of the war on August 1, 1914, to

which that paragraph would seem to point. Certainly, since that August day, there has been "a great inrush of souls into the Light", and that the entire world is feeling a new "down-rush of spirit power" can hardly be a matter of doubt. The result is too apparent. The truth is that we are entering on another epoch. It is to be one where direct and personal communication between those in the ethereal and those in the physical worlds will become recognized as a part of normal experience. If this communication is one of the wonders of to-day, it will be one of the commonly accepted facts of to-morrow. Things which are unexplained are not necessarily unexplainable. We shall contemplate life from a new basis of departure. The change is one as marvellous and far-reaching as was the new perception of the world made necessary after the discovery of Columbus. Heretofore man has contemplated the sojourn in the visible world as constituting what he called life; as being the standard of measurement so far as immediate realities were concerned; as being the unit of departure, from which speculative thought fared forth. This attitude usually included an assortment of hopes, or of beliefs that "another life"

would be entered upon, sometime, somewhere, somehow, but the matter was so largely involved in the dim realms of conjecture as to incite the "practical" man to declare that we could know nothing about it, and, after the way of poor Tulliver, "with whom spelling was a matter of private judgment", the conditions of the hereafter were held to be very much a matter of individual conception.

Within comparatively recent years an entirely new theory, or rather, a theory largely derived from ancient Oriental philosophies, has been formulated; one that does not in the least conflict with the Christian idea, but which enlarges and supplements its ordinary interpretation. This theory contemplates man as a more complex being, and in relations to a more complex universe than is usually set forth. This conception, which will be more fully alluded to in later pages in this volume, teaches that the great scheme of human life is on the nature of planetary rounds; and if it were seen to be true that the sojourn on earth is very brief compared with the long period that follows it in the ethereal, where the life is positive and significant to a degree undreamed-of here; if it were seen that it is that

state which is the unit of departure, the standard from which to estimate all values, would not this conception greatly change man's outlook? Were it also accepted that the sojourn here is creating the conditions on which man first enters into this next stage of progress, would it not largely alter the scale of things held to be important? If it should be that man is placed on earth to develop qualities, the events and circumstances conducing to this development would then be recognized as comparatively incidental, while the qualities were of real moment.

Theological symbolism has been so literally translated as to involve much of the religious teaching with strangely erroneous ideas. Death has been held as such a finality; the symbolic imagery of golden harps and waving palms has been mistakenly regarded as meaning the literal description of conditions entered upon after leaving the physical world; all these, and much more that could be presented, have served to cloud the perceptions, and lead to such erroneous conceptions of the future as to interpose serious obstacles in the way of spiritual development. To grasp the truth of the absolute continuity of consciousness; that the withdrawal from the

visible world and the entrance on the ethereal is to be no break in pursuits and purposes ; that the next condition of life is as natural as is this one ; that the development and the practice of all that is noblest and finest here is the creation of still more perfect conditions for their continued exercise — to grasp something of these truths is to put life here and now on a new center. The fundamental truth that we are all spiritual beings ; that death is simply the casting off of an outer garment ; that all intellectual and spiritual activities continue, that love and prayer keep one closely within the divine leading ; that this divine leading and help is absolutely unfailing — these fundamental truths that any child six years old can well understand, should be taught to children. It is sad to let a little child feel the terror of death which is so universal an event that children cannot be shielded from its knowledge. Should they not hear less of the fear of God and more of the love of God ? Should they not be surrounded with the precious assurances of the tenderness of Jesus and His unfailing response to every one who turns to Him for direction, for help, for strength ?

Faith is the priceless possession of the soul. It is the condition, and the absolutely indispen-

sable condition, of receptivity to the divine aid. When Jesus, in a certain city, "did not mighty works there, because of their unbelief", it reveals how even His infinite power could not work save by accord with spiritual laws. It was not that He would not, but that even *He* could not, under the lack of conditions. To many, if not to most of us, faith in the divine promises is abundantly sufficient to assure us of immortal life. To many of us the statement sometimes made that the only actual proof of continued existence is contained in communications received from those who have passed through death, and who abundantly prove their identity to the senses—to many of us such "proof" is of far less import than are the assurances contained in the Holy Word and taught by every form of religion. But if there are those, and they are numerous, who are so constituted as to place more reliance on proofs and manifestations that appeal to the senses, their welfare also is a matter of vital concern to humanity. Nor is it the indication of any lack of spirituality to find eager and intelligent interest in all extension of the areas of knowledge. When the Archbishop of Canterbury visited the United States in the autumn of 1904,



one of his most memorable discourses contained the question, "The life beyond, — what is it? What is its bearing on these present working years? What is its relation to the life about us?"

These interrogations recur now as a still more immediate issue, when the swift and tragic transition of the myriads slain in the most terrible conflict the world has ever witnessed, renders the question one so vital to the multitude of bereaved households. Where are these who so suddenly vanished from mortal sight? What relation is there between their present life and our own? Though we do not see them, do they see us? Can our love and thought still reach them? Are they in conditions impenetrable to our comprehension, or is their realm of life more open to us than we have realized? And may it not be possible not only that "Love bridges the chasm", but that there is no chasm to bridge?

Science and religion were formerly regarded as mutually exclusive; as two opposing and irreconcilable things. Then came a period, perhaps even somewhat extending into the present, when eminent divines and learned men sought to find harmonious relations between the two. To a marked degree science is now even leading the

way to larger acceptations of religion, to the expansion of religion itself. Edison has said that science is mostly imagination; that it is by conceiving what might be, before it is practically realized, that science is buoyed up during its periods of experiment. Imagination is constructive. Raised to its highest power, it is insight and intuition, and these are able to penetrate the unknown and construct an hypothesis. Some of the most important discoveries in astrophysics have been made in this way. From facts that were known, the astronomer postulates others that would coördinate with them and that, if true, would offer their explanation. On this basis of the scientific imagination, he determines the theories that would sustain conjectural possibilities. In this line of research stellar photography has come to play a great part. The laws of the sidereal heavens disclosed certain conditions that it would seem could only exist if a planet were in a given place; yet the telescope failed to reveal such a planet. But the sensitive plate of the photographer caught it, this star that was where a star should be to produce the effects observed. In a similar manner is it not possible for the spirit of man to penetrate, by processes of divination,

into the conditions of the unseen realm that disclose themselves to psychical investigation and are found to harmonize with religious faith and to sustain its significance?

Science is constantly extending its range of knowledge as to the nature of the immaterial world. The realms beyond the senses may yet be explored. Close at hand, and all around us, just outside of that which the eye can see, and the ear can hear, and the hand can touch, is an infinite and a wonderful world. The intuitive spiritual recognition of the poet, the philosopher, the religious seer, has long since assured man of the reality of the unseen; but now science itself, with exact knowledge, is extending its field into this ethereal realm. The laboratory demonstrates the actual existence of matter too fine for the physical senses to discern. Hand in hand with the science of the laboratory, psychical research has established the absolute truth that communication may exist between those in the Seen and those in the Unseen. That death is not the end of life, that it is, as Phillips Brooks well said, simply one event *in* life, is a truth too widely and too convincingly attested to longer be subject to doubt. It is a truth as well estab-

lished in the minds of the intelligent investigator as is that of the law of gravitation. The process of death — what is it? Simply the withdrawal of the spiritual man, clothed in his ethereal body, from the physical body, as one would withdraw his hand from a glove. Man does not acquire a spiritual body by this withdrawal. He has always lived in it, though outwardly encased by the visible body. "There is a natural body and there *is* a spiritual body", said Saint Paul; not that there *would be* a spiritual body in some vague future. The tangible body relates man, as has been said, with the physical world. It relates the man to the realm in which he makes this temporary sojourn. The law of vibration determines this relation. The physical body is in harmonious vibration with the physical world. The only reason that we cannot see our friends after they have made the Adventure Beautiful is that the physical eye cannot register the vibrations of the ethereal body. They are too fine and too subtle. When we once realize this simple fact, it is no more mysterious than that the eye, unaided, cannot see what it plainly discerns through the microscope or the telescope. These two scientific appliances reveal realms below and

above and thus outside of the domain of the senses. That domain is, indeed, so limited that if man were not able to extend it, he would be confined to a very inconsiderable region of his present environment.

The withdrawal of the man from the physical body is, then, the entrance on a larger life. The discarded body has served its purpose of relating the individual to the physical world for a given period, during which he has acquired certain lessons that are now transmuted into spiritual experience. Withdrawing, he enters on a new phase of experience.

Eternal process, moving on ;

From state to state the spirit walks.

As a matter of actual fact, the problem of death is equally the problem of life. It concerns the entire quality of everyday living. It is an activity and a progress shared ever by the Witnesses, — those

Who speak no word,

Who summon not by gesture or by touch,

Who stay not eager hands or straying feet,

Who hinder not the deed that is our will ;

Who wait and watch ;

Who pause with us at parting of the ways,  
Who take with us whichever road we choose,  
Who go with us, as love goes, to the end.<sup>1</sup>

Death, being the portal through which we pass to an environment that is more favorable to the nurture of the spiritual powers, is no more to be thought of as a disaster than is the entrance on university study, or foreign travel, or any other gateway to new and enlarging interests. Reverend R. J. Campbell, in a discourse preached in the City Temple in London, thus alludes to this change :

The life beyond — save for physical and material conditions — will not essentially be different from life here. We arrive even in this world, as my correspondent points out, with varying degrees of soul power. So shall we also arrive yonder. For the materialist who has lived to self, a spiritual world, with an atmosphere strange and overpowering, with all that he clung to gone, with an environment that he has always turned from and a language he has never learned to speak, would be retribution enough. The very conditions of existence, the new vision, the absolute necessity for coming to terms with his surroundings will force him to revise all his decisions and conclusions.

<sup>1</sup>“The Hidden Garden.” Florence D. Snelling.

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In so ordering the outward life that spiritual progress is accelerated, due emphasis must be placed upon physical habits. The relations between the physical and the ethereal bodies is so intimate as to be reactionary. It is because of this that the enlightened urge upon humanity the knowledge of the dangerous effect of drugs. They not only wreck the body but the mind, the higher powers, as well. President Jordan, of the Leland Stanford, speaks with no uncertain note of this aspect of life when he calls attention to the fact "that the influence of all drugs which affect the nervous system must be in the direction of disintegration", and he adds :

The healthy mind stands in clear and normal relation with Nature. It feels pain as pain, it feels action as pleasure. The drug which conceals pain or gives false pleasure when pleasure does not exist, forces a lie upon the nervous system. The drug which disposes to reverie rather than work, which makes us feel well when we are not, destroys the sanity of life. All stimulants, narcotics, tonics, which affect the nervous system, in whatever way, reduce the truthfulness of sensation, thought and action. Toward insanity all such influences lead ; and their effect, slight though it may be, is of the same nature

as mania. The man who would see clearly, think truthfully and act effectively must avoid them all. Emergency aside, he cannot safely urge upon his nervous system even the smallest falsehood. And here lies the one great unanswerable argument for total abstinence: not abstinence from alcohol alone, but from all nerve poisons and emotional excesses.

Salvation, in its real sense, is a matter of body, soul, and spirit. It is the concern of the present hour as well as of a future eternity. If we wish to be saved, let us be saved now. Let us begin to-day to enter on that finer order of life that is in harmonious vibration with the higher forces. Then, when we withdraw from the mortal plane, we shall be better fitted for the next plane on which we enter. By the very nature of the human organism, man is connected with the entire universe by an intricate system of vibrations, of influences, of waves in the ether, of an enormous array of the invisible. Dean Inge remarks that "Eternal life is not something future, — it is now! I believe," he continued, "that if we dwelt on this aspect of eternal life — as a blessed state to be begun here and perfected hereafter — we should find the doctrine more fruitful to ourselves and more credible to those we wish to influence."



There is an obstacle that presents itself to the minds of many, in the contemplation of a more rational philosophy, which is in the traditional supposition that death introduces the individual to perfect happiness — or the reverse. This is no more true, nor consistent with the evolutionary advance of the spirit, than that a given birthday, or other specific date, introduces the person to unalloyed bliss, or unalloyed misery. As all kinds of people live, so all kinds of people die; and the mere fact of death is not in and of itself a transforming process, spiritually. He who has not developed the faculties that *lay hold* on the ethereal life, who has lived within the imprisonment of the senses, not rising to the nobler intellectual and moral state, is no more entirely detached from the alternations of sorrow and struggle than when here. What then? Pain is not a penalty; it is an education. Pain is not infrequently the experience that generates power. It has its ministry, and it is one of the significant factors in human development. The Bahai Revelation offers this impressive truth:

My Calamity is my Providence. In appearance it is Fire and Vengeance; in reality it is Light and Mercy. Therefore approach it, that thou

mayest become an Eternal Light, and an Immortal Spirit.

Pain is remedial. Sorrow has its lessons to impart. Death does not interrupt the continuity of growth by working a miracle. The valid objection to the ordinary séance phenomena is that much of the manifestation is liable to proceed from the more crude and inconsequential who have passed over. Yet it rests with the sitter as to what company he shall attract and choose, just as it does in the visible life. The more sincerely one relates himself to the diviner forces by prayer, by aspiration, by love—by thought and deed that are unselfish and noble—the more is he in touch with the higher order of companionship in the ethereal realms. One must beware of evil spirits in this part of life as well as in that which is to come.

Those who do not accept the Christian faith as absolute authority for immortality; who declare that there is no proof of survival save by actual communication with those who have passed through death, may take heart. For this actual proof of survival exists. After the careful elimination of various other explanations that account for some phases of psychic phenomena ;

after the applied scrutiny of science, of philosophy, or psychology, there still remains a proportion of these phenomena for which no rational explanation can be given save that they are precisely what they purport to be — communication from the Unseen.

For many of us, indeed, the assurances of Jesus, the Christ, as to immortality, are all-satisfying. For many it is inconceivable that convictions of immortal life should be based on messages received in the séance room. All one's faith, all one's spiritual intuitions, so entirely preponderate over any merely objective testimony as to render it negligible. Even if psychical research had never been heard of, how could one doubt the divine assurances? Still, there are a great number of people — intellectual, moral, sympathetic, fine — who frankly declare that such messages constitute to them the only actual proof of immortality. Confronting this fact, is it not quite within the divine leading that those who thus need it shall receive its assurances? Holman Hunt, in a talk with Mr. E. Wade Cook shortly before his death, related that at one time, meeting Ruskin abroad, he found him plunged in gloom that all the privileges of Oxford could not

lighten. For his doubt as to the continuance of life after death had finally merged into settled atheism. A year or two later Ruskin and Holman Hunt met again. Mr. Ruskin was radiant and glowing with the joy of a very renewal of life, and in reply to Mr. Hunt's questioning he said that the change was entirely due to what he termed "modern Spiritualism." Messages that he had received had convinced him of the persistence of life and of consciousness. This change was in part, at least, due to the influence of Mrs. Browning. Between herself and Mr. Ruskin there was a frequent correspondence extending over many years, and in one letter, written from Rome in the January of 1859, she says:

What would this life be, dear Mr. Ruskin, if it had not eternal relations? For my part, if I did not believe so, I should lay my head down and die. Nothing would be worth doing, certainly. But I am what many people call a "mystic", and what I myself call a "realist", because I consider that every step of the foot, or stroke of the pen, here, has some real connection with, and result in, the hereafter.

Mrs. Browning was never credulous and indiscriminating in her attitude toward spiritualistic

phenomena. She was, however, intelligently alert, and she very clearly reveals her mental attitude in the following paragraph from a letter to Miss Haworth that she wrote from Rome in the winter of 1861 :

As far as I am concerned, I have never heard or read a single communication which impressed me in the least ; what *does* impress me is the fact of there being communications at all ! I look at the movement. What are these intelligences communicating ? What is their state ? what their aspiration ? Have we had part, or shall we have part, with them ? Is this the corollary of man's life on the earth, or are they unconscious echoes of his embodied soul ? That anyone should admit a fact (such as a man being lifted into the air, for instance), and not be interested in it, is so foreign to the habits of my mind (which can't insulate a fact from an inference and rest there) that I have not a word to say. Only I see that if this class of facts, however grotesque, be recognized among thinkers, our reigning philosophy will modify itself ; scientific men will conceive differently from Humboldt (for instance) of the mystery of life ; the materialism that stifles the higher instincts of men will be dislodged, and the rationalism which divides Oxford with Romanism will receive a blow. . . .

No truth can be dangerous. . . . But the whole theory of spiritualism, all the phenomena, are strikingly confirmatory of revelation; nothing strikes me more than that. Hume's argument against miracles (a strong argument) disappears before it, and Strauss's conclusions from *a priori* assertion of impossibilities fall in pieces at once.

The initial question regarding all the phenomena claimed is not as to its value, but as to its existing truth. Doctor James Hervey Hyslop (in "Science and a Future Life") declares, in reply to the assertion that alleged messages are of an inconsequential nature, that "triviality cannot be treated as an objection to spiritistic theories", and he proceeds to say:

. . . If the facts make the spiritistic theory the only rational supposition possible to explain them it has to be accepted whether desirable or not. Our business as scientists is not with the desirability of the next life, but with the fact of it. We have to accept the life to come, if it be a fact, without any ability to escape it, and its degenerated nature would not affect the evidence for the fact of it. . . . In any case, however, the desirability or undesirability of a future existence has nothing to do with the scientific question whether it is a fact.

This view of the matter cannot be evaded and it is irrefutable.

As has been said, many of us do not need to go beyond the testimony of revealed religion, beyond the assurances of the Saviour, beyond the intuitive convictions of one's own soul, for absolute belief in immortality. But revealed religion is capable of expansion. No belief, no philosophy of life, no truth, even, is final. The horizon line constantly advances. "What comes from God has life in it, and certainly from all the growth of living things, spiritual growth cannot be excepted." And if the fact of survival after death is capable of scientific proof as well as one supported by religious faith, the faith is by no means lessened or impaired. As a matter of record, the teachings of Jesus, Himself, were reinforced and substantiated by visible and audible manifestations from the ethereal side. The Bible is full of these records of the appeal to the senses. The eye sees, the ear hears, beyond what is commonly visible or audible. It is not necessary to cite chapter and verse, for the long list of references that might be offered in support of this assertion are, or easily may be, familiar to every one. Survival after death is as undeniably proven as

are the laws of the universe. If the entire vast mass of testimony to this assertion, from the Old and the New Testaments to all the modern records, were thrown out of court, so to speak, the world would seem chaotic. We should be totally unable to account for a very great proportion of overwhelmingly important and fundamental facts. As a matter of truth, the Christian religion is founded on the very basis of spiritual manifestations. The entire life of Jesus, the Christ, reveals His experience of a twofold environment. That

The spirit-world, around this world of sense,  
Floats like an atmosphere,

is none the less a scientific fact in that it is stated by a poet. How could death be other than the most beautiful adventure in life when it is simply the process by means of which man enters into this ethereal realm? "Death is not a word to fear any more than birth is," says Sir Oliver Lodge. "We change our state at birth; we change it at death. The 'dead' are not dead, but alive." And where are they? They are in the ethereal world that corresponds with the ethereal body. The environment is one of in-



creased energy. This liberation of the spiritual man from his physical body is not only an extension of his powers but also of their degree of expression. How clearly Lowell sees this when he writes:

Now I can love thee truly,  
For nothing comes between  
The senses and the spirit;  
The seen and the unseen.

A new aspect of sweet relations is experienced. There seem to be three states of these dearest and most precious relations: the first when both are together in the physical world; the second when one has passed into the ethereal and one still remains here; and the third when both are again united in the ethereal environment. Each one of these conditions has its own joys. For it is a great misapprehension of existing realities to invest the second of these periods with gloom and despair. It is really an interlude divinely given that may be made a season of the most radiant expansion of spiritual life. It may be an experience pervaded by a sacred joyousness that even enters into the peace that passeth understanding. Does it seem almost a sacrilege

to speak of joy in any relation to a period usually so steeped in sadness? Almost instinctively the bereaved one turns from light and sunshine and gladness as a mockery that emphasizes his sorrow; and it would be a meager and unpardonably unsympathetic expression not to realize this sensitive state when, from a great love, has vanished the object of its devotion. One would not, indeed, speak of pleasure, which is a thing of earth; but joy is of the heavenly order. "Enter thou into the joy of the Lord!" Joy is as much an integral part of the divine quality as is love. With every nerve thrilling with pain, the one left desolate may cling with pathetic intensity to his faith that God does not willingly afflict His children, even though this faith to which he clings does not withhold him from groping in what seems impenetrable darkness and mystery. It would be a poor attempt, indeed, at any consolation or comfort, that did not comprehend these feelings. And yet, and yet,—there *is* comfort. The vanishing by death is the absolutely universal human experience. It is only a question of time when the call comes to every one.

An eminent New York artist, John Hemming Fry, has in recent years painted a picture sug-

gested by Bryant's poem of "Thanatopsis." In the foreground are a group of figures ranging from youth to old age, while Destiny, shrouded, hooded, a mysterious Presence, stands by. Through marble portals beyond her a long procession is seen receding down the dim vista, "the innumerable throng" who are passing on. The genius of the artist has wonderfully interpreted the allegorical significance. Even if it were true that between the Seen and the Unseen there were an impenetrable barrier through which those on either side could not pass, even then sorrow would not be hopeless, because the present state of life has its definite limits. We know that, humanly speaking, sometime within a hundred years from our entrance into this world, we shall pass from it. Were life in the physical environment absolutely restricted to that environment, even then we must realize that it is full of significance, of dignity, and of opportunity. It is a sojourn rich in privileges. If any communion of spirit with spirit across that change we call death were totally impossible, even then life on earth would have its duties, its hopes, its convictions. Even then it would have that one supreme and unconquerable assurance of faith in God. With

that faith, life is rich, however deprived of all other blessings it may be. For above all mortal changes, or loss, or disaster, stands the Eternal Goodness; the infinite and tender love of Jesus, the Christ; the overwhelming reality and importance of the Christian life. The deepest experiences of the soul must always lift it to God with renewed consecration. Faith in God and in immortality is our richest heritage. The reunion, then, in the condition of life immediately following the change we call death, is as certain as existence itself.

Now that change we call death is not an evil. Nothing disastrous has happened to him who has withdrawn from the physical world. For all the centuries generation after generation have been very largely reared in the imagery of the "darkness of the tomb", and similar expressions. Even our religious teachings, to a very great extent, have tacitly if not positively assumed that an almost irreparable sorrow is inseparable from the death of those dearest to us; that while faith looks up, and believes, and lays hold of the divine promises; while religion offers freely her consolations, yet the great sorrow is a fact that, like any other disaster of life, must be

reckoned with. There are consolations for every form of tragedy and suffering; yet all the same, tragedy and suffering are held to be among the real experiences. The press of the country also adds its emphasis of loss that is usually held to be universal. The lines meet the eye of the reader in expressions that the man's work is finished; that he has gone; that he could ill be spared — in short, that a very sad event has occurred which we must meet with what fortitude and faith we may, and this attitude toward death is the prevailing one.

Now shall not the larger expansion of religion, the larger knowledge of science, give us a truer view? Just what has happened? The spiritual man (the real being) has been released from his physical body, which was merely the temporary instrument by means of which he was able to relate himself to the physical world. He has emerged from this temporary outer case as we emerge from discarded clothing in changing one costume for another.

(1) The physical body is in correspondence with the physical realm.

(2) The ethereal body is in correspondence with the ethereal realm.

(3) Consciousness is not a function inseparable from the physical brain, but it survives the dissolution of the physical brain because it is a function of the spiritual man.

The interlude between the passing of one to the Unseen and the remaining of one on earth, between two who are in the nearest relations, may be a period rich in the closer approach of the spirit, each to each; of the clearer mutual comprehension; of the constant exaltation of the one left on earth by being thus drawn to share the new experiences of the one who has vanished from mortal sight. For the vanished one is to be thought of only as in the life more abundant; in larger activities, keener interests, more comprehensive sympathies. It is one of the most beautiful of relations, and never should we allow it to be desecrated by gloom and despairing sadness. Nothing could interpose so effectual a barrier between the two as for the one left on earth to sink into hopeless inaction. Rather, let every energy be quickened; every possibility of being useful to others be embraced; every fiber of the spiritual life be vitalized.

Nor need we think of the friend who has passed as impersonal; "discarnate"; the spiritual body

is more real than the physical body; and spirit is always clothed in form. Do not let a simple and rational conception, founded upon the teachings of Jesus, the Christ, be devastated and bewildered by the psychologist's suggestion of "a stream of consciousness", or a "surviving" but unformulated energy. There is, indeed, a surviving energy; but it is embodied in the ethereal organism which is as positive and definite in relation to the ethereal world as is the present body to the present world.

The consecration, the sacredness of death, is not less that it is seen in a more intelligent comprehension of its real nature. There is no lapse in the continuity of conscious being. The spiritual man has simply withdrawn from the outer visible case, so to speak, which has served its purpose and is now discarded. With tender reverence we commit this discarded body to the last offices, but thought and love center themselves upon the real being, transported to another plane of existence. Another wonderful period of experience now opens before him—the most beautiful experience in life, even the *Adventure Beautiful*!

## CHAPTER II

### THE REALITY OF THE UNSEEN

"You road I enter upon and look around! I believe you are not all that is here;

I believe that much unseen is also here."

WALT WHITMAN.

"For the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

II CORINTHIANS, iv, 18.

THE development of the supernormal powers latent in man will entirely transform his environment by affording him access to higher planes. The reality of the unseen realm is all about us; that which has always been discerned by the seer and the poet, is now being discovered and described by science. Theosophy speculatively affirms that man has a series of bodies which serve as successive vehicles for the spiritual occupant; and that each of these bodies is, in succession, finer and more subtle. Thus



the body of man keeps in correspondence with these successively finer environments. It is not alone by the release from the physical world that man will become aware of the unseen universe; the physical body may be refined and tuned to correspond with a higher range of vibrations and thus initiate its occupant here and now into what is practically a new world. This process of training is presented in many books and by many writers in the literature of theosophy which are within easy access to all. New fields of human thought and activity invite humanity. The special training liberates the individual and introduces him to an higher condition of life. This unseen environment is in the ether of space. Nor is this an unknown or wholly undiscovered region to us. Science has already penetrated into the very nature of the ether. Lord Kelvin's researches contributed much of value. Sir Oliver Lodge has extended these and has made such discoveries of his own in the nature of the ether that he asserts it is a region of great certainty and knowledge. In his patient study of its electric and magnetic properties he has solved many of its problems. "The ether is not only uniformly present and all-pervading," says the great

scientist, "but also massive and substantial beyond conception. It is turning out to be by far the most substantial thing — perhaps the only substantial thing, in the material universe, in comparison with which the densest matter, such as lead, or gold, is a filmy, gossamer structure; like a comet's tail, or a milky way, or a salt in a very dilute solution." Does not this substantial nature of the ether suggest a very conceivable environment for the ethereal body? For the immortal spirit of man is always embodied; and to speak of "discarnate" intelligencies, as is so often done, is to make the conception of the next state of life one obscure and unreal. As a matter of fact, the life entered upon in the ethereal world is as much more real than the present life as manhood is more real than childhood. As life progresses, it grows constantly more significant in its nature. The ethereal life is more intense in its energy. The energy of the physical world depends on the ether, and were its flow checked, even for an instant, points out an English scientist, the whole physical world would vanish, as a cloud melts away. It is only the continuity of the ether flow that sustains the physical basis of the

universe. The ether is found to be so elastic in its properties that a body moves through it without friction. This fact accounts for the almost rapturous expressions of many of those in the ethereal world regarding their joy in the freedom of movement. All these data unite science and psychical research in results of harmonious correspondence.

The reality of the unseen realms that lie beyond the recognition of the senses is manifested in laboratory experiments. Science demonstrates the existence of some forty-six octaves of vibrations of which the senses give no report. The spiritual (or ethereal) body is in a state of far more intense vibration than is the physical body, and the reason that we do not see our friends who have passed into the ethereal realm is simply because the physical eye cannot register so high a rate of vibration. An illustrative proof of this may be found by the simple process of fixing the eye upon a revolving disk whose speed constantly increases. When it comes to revolve so rapidly that the rate is beyond the octave which the eye can register, it disappears; then, as the rate of vibration decreases, it comes into sight again. The physical senses have their

definite limit of perception which, on a general average, is about at the forty-ninth octave, and beyond this a new realm, so to speak, begins, — the realm of the superphysical. Marvels of light, of sound, of new sensations lie beyond this threshold that exceed the present conceptions of humanity. Sir William Crookes, in his president's address before the British Association at the meeting in Bristol, England, in 1898, said that all the phenomena of the universe are, presumably, continuous waves; and that we have good evidence that they extend from one to two thousand trillions per second, in their rate of vibration, thus varying in frequency and velocity. It is ascertained that sound extends from two hundred and fifty-six to more than a million vibrations per second; that electrical rays range from more than thirty-three million to more than thirty-five trillions per second; that rays of heat extend to unknown infinities; that the Röntgen (or X) rays range to the unthinkable rapidity of over two quintillions per second, and that radium rays may extend to more than four times this number, which defies the grasp of the mind. Regarding these stupendous computations Sir William proceeds to say:

It will be seen from these that at the fifth step from unity, at thirty-two vibrations per second, we reach the region where atmospheric vibration reveals itself to us as sound. At more than thirty-two thousand per second, to the average human ear the region of sound ends; but certain highly endowed animals probably hear sounds too acute for our organs, that is, sounds which vibrate at a higher rate. After the thirty-second step vibration increases rapidly, giving us electric waves, light waves at an unthinkable number of vibrations per second, until we reach the X-ray and finally the radium-ray. The rays of radium are the results of quintillions of vibrations per second, and are so subtle that they pass through all solids. It may be that the X-waves and the radium waves are only at the threshold of the wonders of the unseen universe. . . . It seems to me in these rays we may have a possible mode of transmitting intelligence which, with a few reasonable postulates, may supply a key to much that is obscure in physical research. Let it be assumed that these rays, or rays even of higher frequency, can pass into the brain and act on some nervous centre there. Let it be conceived that the brain contains a centre which uses these rays as the vocal chords use sound vibrations (both being under the command of intelligence), and sends them out with the velocity of light, to impinge on the receiving ganglion of another brain.

In this way some at least of the phenomena of telepathy and the transmission of intelligence from one sensitive to another through long distances seem to come into the domain of law, and can be grasped. . . . And is it also inconceivable that our mundane ideas of space and distance may be superseded in these subtle regions of unsubstantial thought where "near" and "far" may lose their usual meaning?

Science thus not only postulates but actually demonstrates the actual existence of this superphysical realm which is the region of all the higher forces into whose comprehension and use the world is steadily advancing. The nineteenth century was characterized by the discovery of steam as a force, a force whose application fairly ushered in a new civilization; and the latter years of this century are memorable for the development of electrical power which the twentieth century is still further unfolding to an extent formerly undreamed of, and revealing possibilities so infinite as to elude any definite grasp of their ultimate nature, or prediction as to future applications. The electric current that supplied heat, light, and motor power is now, in the closing years of the second decade of the century, giving place to the high frequency current that opens

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the portals to a new universe. It is already discovered that at a certain altitude there is a region of infinite and limitless power. If this could be successfully tapped and related to practical needs, science would undergo vast changes. Sir William Crookes estimates that within a single cubic foot of the ether which fills all space there are locked up thousands of tons of energy which have not yet been brought to knowledge. Here are infinite resources now as unknown to the world as were the present applications of electric power at the time that Franklin struck a spark from his kite. These as yet unmapped and unexplored stores of energy are destined to create as great changes in the future as have been brought about by the invention of the printing press, by the discovery of steam, the invention of the steam engine, the telegraph, the ocean cable, the telephone, and the wireless. The possibilities of the airship, the submarine, are only in their infancy. The secrets of the universe are to be increasingly wrested from nature and harnessed to the service of man. The history of civilization is that of man's increasing conquest of nature. All phenomena are subject to the adjustment and the control of conditions. Man, made in the divine

image, has supremacy over conditions. And even beyond the incalculable power of electricity in its high frequency manifestations is another power infinitely greater, that of thought. This supreme quality raises man to the creative power of the divine. And as man advances in the unfoldment of the ages, the power of thought will be that which he will ultimately use for all purposes within the range of applied force. The transmission of electrical power without wires is now the problem of the hour, or, at least, of the immediate future. There are strata of the atmosphere which are perfect conductors of this force. Discovering how to best utilize these, power would be available in any part of the earth. Motor and trolley cars, electrical trains, and mechanisms would no longer require the production of energy by the dynamo, but would extract it from the air. This discovery will be made. It is only a question of time. It would supersede all our present system of heating and lighting. Energy instantly convertible into heat and light would be drawn from the atmosphere, which is the universal reservoir of energy. It will be recognized to how wonderful a degree such conditions would transform the world in which



we are now living, rendering it as much in advance of its present state as is our present in advance of a wilderness inhabited only by savages. The evolutionary progress of the world keeps pace with the evolutionary progress of man. His increasing insight into the laws of nature and the control afforded by this increasing comprehension of them create new conditions successively.

Now it is with all this larger outlook on the universe itself that the subject of physical research, or of direct communication between the Seen and the Unseen, is associated. It is not a mere arbitrary and isolated phenomena; it is an inherent part of the spiritual life of humanity. We speak of the present and of the future life; but strictly speaking, there is no dividing line to life itself, although the form of its manifestations changes. Life itself is a continuity, unbroken, unchanged, uninterrupted by these transitions of form. The analogy is that of a change of costumes; in one, or in another, the individual is the same. Thus, in the physical body or in the ethereal body, the essential identity, the individuality, is one. The present and the future are but phases of the same continuity. That which

we call the future is the evolutionary product of the life of to-day. If one desires a given aspect of life five years hence, let him begin to live for it at once. He desires scholarly culture; let him begin to study. He desires wealth; let him begin to earn, to save, to create, to amass. He desires sympathetic companionship and the love of his fellow beings; let him cultivate in himself those qualities that inspire friends and affections. Life has been compared to the weaver's loom. If it is desired to change the color of the fabric from blue to green, he begins to weave in green threads. The power of will is given to man as a determining factor, and the culture of the will, which is only perfected by bringing it into harmonious receptivity with the divine will, is the secret of all success, all happiness. One of the greatest fallacies is a nebulous idea that to come into accord with God's will is a kind of helpless, hopeless, passive surrender of activity. On the contrary, it is the relating of one's self to the invincible energy. This is what Emerson means by his counsel, "Hitch your wagon to a star." Well does Emerson also say :

All is vague and worthless till  
Arrives the wise, selecting will.

The will is the engine of power — a force that may be used for good or for evil. This rests with the man himself. The will is the divine force, the creative impulse that may dominate circumstances, and to exert the “wise, selecting will” is the necromancy that conquers. The unselfish, the redeemed will, is man’s salvation. Its province is not control for selfish benefit; it is to use this resistless force for the betterment of all humanity and thus to be in harmonious accord, and in a more complete receptivity to the power that holds the infinite universes in their destined course.

Deep in the man sits fast his fate  
To mould his fortunes mean or great.

The base of supplies for human life lies in the realities of the Unseen. Power increases for him who power exerts.

Hast not thy share? On wingèd feet  
Lo! it rushes thee to meet.

George Eliot speaks of the souls “pauperized by inaction.” The phrase is one to record in memory. The passive acceptance of whatever may chance to occur is unworthy a man. He is

to bring to bear his selective and creative ability. He is on earth to do something. One may always become that which he wills to become; not in the twinkling of an eye, not by a miracle moment, but by intelligent and persistent working toward it. In all the infinity of creation there is no room for despair. There is guidance for each and all; there is abundance of room for achievement for each and all. Thought and will — those are the implements with which to conquer in the realm of the unseen realities; and one may well keep in mind another suggestion of Emerson, that

Unless to Thought is added Will  
Apollo is an imbecile.

Meditation and concentration are all very good as means — really indispensable means also — to an end. But they are not an end in themselves. No one ever created a joyous and successful life by gazing at a ha'penny red star, pasted on the wall, to incite him to concentration! Let us give all just dues to "occult" teaching; 'it *has* just dues; but let us also bear in mind Guizot's statement that common sense is the genius of humanity. "The universe exists for him who

wills, who loves, who prays," said Balzac; "but he *must* will, he *must* love, he *must* pray." We become that which we will. We possess that which we will. We arrive, some time, "in God's good time" if we keep our footsteps toward the desired end, if we keep true to the dream and follow the vision.

In this universe whose center for man is his own being, and whose circumference extends to the infinite eternities, one finds himself. What is he to do? What is he here for? Whence did he come, and by what path and process shall he proceed?

The life of the spirit and the best conditions for progress cannot be defined without some familiarity with the laws of the immaterial world. Matter exists in a constantly ascending series of refinement. These octaves that belong to the realms beyond the senses consist of more and more intense vibrations. Ultra-violet light, for instance, begins only with the fifty-first octave, and its vibrations are many million times a second. The vibrations of thought are infinitely more rapid than these. Occult writers present a theory that between the spiritual and the physical realms lies a vast magnetic field, whose coarsest

stratum coördinates with the finest vibrations of the physical world, while its finest stratum coördinates with the coarsest and crudest of the spiritual world. This intermediary plane seems to correspond to the Catholic doctrine of Purgatory. Here the ethereal body subsists by the energy of its principles. It has transcended the law of gravitation that holds the denser body under bonds, and it learns with what amazing swiftness it can obey the power of thought and transport itself from world to world. Yet, even while on earth, one may learn to so govern the atomic forces within himself as to enter on a larger and ever increasing control of the atomic forces in space. This is simply the control of the lower by the higher, the dominance of spirit over matter.

Let one center his will on health, prosperity, achievement, vitality, joy; he will find that any one or all of these respond to his demand. The entire elimination of fear; the elimination of doubt and depression; the courage and buoyancy of radiant faith, are the conditions. Conscious and intelligent concentration is a creative force. One can thus raise the entire level of his life. As man is a spiritual being, now and here, much

that is applicable to his progress after entering the ethereal realm is almost equally applicable here. To refine and etherealize the physical body so that it becomes sensitive and susceptible to the finest order of vibrations that pertain to this plane is the secret of gaining remarkable power over the outer conditions of life. "Once realize that the spirit is the man," says one teacher, "and the body a mere temporary appearance and that what we call matter is only assumed by force, and all the phenomena called spiritual can be understood and the foundation of a true psychology established."

It is only as one sees the invisible that he sees reality at all. It is the capacity to see the invisible that determines the scientist. It is in seeing the invisible that men construct great enterprises. The hero is he who dares to take risks. He is a prisoner, indeed, who is limited to the environment of the senses. It is the man who steers boldly into the unknown, who literally walks by faith and not by sight — it is he who achieves great things. We need to gain a clearer comprehension of the boundless and resistless nature of spiritual capacities and powers. Nature is fluidic to the insistence of spirit. The tradi-

tional idea that the spiritual man or woman is principally distinguished by a general incapacity and by the lack of comprehension of practical matters, or of all useful forms of applied energy, is an idea diametrically opposed to the truth. Spiritual power is normal power. Just as sight and hearing and health are normal, while blindness and illness are the abnormal. Efficiency is raised to its highest power when spiritual power and insight take control of the affairs of life. For this becomes a dynamic and invincible force. It is that positive inner dominance that shall conquer and prevail.

To set life to this key while yet in the physical environment is to give the ethereal body, now interpenetrated with the physical, much preliminary training that shall signally aid its advance when it withdraws from the present life. To a considerable degree man may penetrate now and here to the finer realm. Fournier d'Albe, in his "New Light On Immortality", questions how it is possible that two billions of people are annually "rushing on their doom", as he expresses it, "with no definite knowledge as to what that doom may be?" To d'Albe this is strange and unaccountable. "Mankind is so inquisitive, so



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restlessly active in elucidating mysteries, so eager in extending the realm of certainty," he says, "that the land beyond the grave must surely some day be asked to yield up its fruits of truth. Has Science any new light to illumine the Debatable Land?" he continues: "Have we explored in vain the depths of stellar space? We want to know what life is, and what relation it holds to matter; how it is organized and supported, how it thrives and multiplies, decays, and disappears? . . . We want to know how it gives us our present bodies, why they develop as they do, without our knowing or controlling the process; why we pass through certain stages at certain epochs and subsequently, much against our will, gradually withdraw and disappear from the stage. We want to know what constitutes death," he proceeds; "what are its essential attributes and conditions, what makes it inevitable? We want to know what constitutes our individuality and identity, and what hope we have of preserving this identity. We want to know how it feels to die, and what happens to us after we have passed the portals of the Unseen? We want to know whether we shall live forever, and if so, whether we have lived before,

or only begun existence when we entered this world?" M. d'Albe offers an original speculation as to the location in space of the realm inhabited by those who have passed from the physical into the ethereal world. His speculative theory is that it is not necessary to go beyond the earth for that region, but that the atmosphere itself provides "reasonable space and liberty." He further suggests that "the earth's atmosphere is a possible and exceedingly probable place for the spirit-body." Reducing his quest to the definiteness of statistics Fournier d'Albe continues: "The atmosphere extends a hundred miles beyond the earth's surface. It has a lower area of eight hundred million square miles and an upper area of at least eighty billions of cubic miles. Thirty miles above the earth the air is a comparatively good conductor of electricity. As this conducting layer of the atmosphere is probably most effective in absorbing the ultra-violet rays of the sun, a being sensitive to this light would have an impression of brightness above that stratum, and darkness below it."

Is this a scientific explanation of the words: "And they need no candle, neither light of sun, for the Lord God giveth them light?"

All these suggestions and speculative theories are indicative of the trend of inquiry and thought. The spiritual regeneration of man, and the conditions now and here; the conditions that surround him when he finally withdraws from the visible world — these are two themes which never lose their interest and their importance. For each is closely allied to the two-fold life that man lives while on earth. By means of his physical body he is related to the physical world. As a spiritual being (even while tenanting his temporary physical body), he is related to the spiritual world in which he really lives and moves and has his essential life. Kant declares that "at some future day it will be proved that the human soul is, while on earth, in an uninterrupted communion with those living in another world; that the human soul acts upon these beings, and in return receives impressions of them." Intuitively, the poets have always recognized this truth. Lowell has embodied the philosophy in the lines:

We see but half the causes of our deeds  
Seeking them wholly in the outer life,  
And heedless of the encircling spirit-world  
Which, though unseen, is felt, and sows in us

No one who thoughtfully scrutinizes his own experience, and receives the confirmations of the experiences of others, can fail to recognize to how great an extent his life is determined by suggestion, prompting, influences, untraced and largely untraceable to any exact source, but which lie without his own consciousness. All this contributes to the reasonable probability, if not the absolute certainty, that he is living in a realm of life both visible and invisible; that the latter is more potent in its effects than the former; that his nature is twofold, responding to both the physical and the ethereal environment, and that continual progress is the destiny of man.

In the light of this larger contemplation, the mere detail of communication between the two worlds takes a subordinate place. It is no longer seen as an isolated phenomenon; but merely as one manifestation, among many perhaps more important, of the inter-relatedness of the twofold life.

## CHAPTER III

### TWENTY YEARS IN RETROSPECT

Truly whatever of the holy realm  
I had the power to treasure in my mind  
Shall now become the subject of my song.

DANTE.

**T**WENTY years have passed since the publication of the little book entitled "After Her Death; The Story of a Summer", whose theme was that of a singularly vivid series of psychical experiences, with attendant comment or speculative thought, following on the death of a friend who proved to be one of the best of communicators from the unseen side. The appearance of that book in 1897 has led, in these twenty swiftly passing years, to the receipt of hundreds of letters from strangers, or (may I not indulge myself in saying?) from friends whom I had not been privileged to meet; stran-

gers seeming too cold a word for the friendliness, the sympathetic understandings, the mutual interests that we were all to discover. Many of the most priceless among a long list of treasured friendships were initiated in these letters, growing into correspondences, personal meetings to some extent, into relations unusually gratifying. Many of these friends and correspondents inquire from time to time if the experiences touched upon in that book still continue whether their character has essentially changed whether they grow to be more or less frequent? All these have perhaps stimulated an impulse to add a sequel to that twenty-years-away volume, and to offer (may I venture to hope?) some transcription of that larger philosophy into which one should grow during so long a period.

As for the experiences themselves, they have never lessened, nor indeed, did they begin with merely the event that initiated the series of which many were related in that book. To him who has recognizable manifestations of the life in a realm beyond that of the senses, they become part and parcel of his very existence, compact of his spiritual development in such

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degree as it has yet been achieved, and are of a nature to accompany and companion him throughout every day. Such as they are, they are a component part of the normal life. There is nothing fantastic or abnormal in receiving these intimations of presences that are felt, although unseen. These "intimations of immortality" partake only partially of objective phenomena. They largely relate themselves to the general trend of the inner life. In the majority of instances, however, they are also linked with the objective life, not infrequently in a manner that seems to constitute so apparent a test of the experience being precisely what it purports to be as to preclude any other explanation. Such are the unexplored intricacies of the inner life that it is only as experiences are more or less manifested in the outer, that they can be absolutely accepted, even by the person to whom they occur. For instance, a strong impression of a given event comes into one's mind; it may seem to him as entirely objective as if some friend had come in and stated it; yet it would be very difficult to prove (even to himself) that his own mind had not evolved or conceived of it. Sometimes, from the mysterious and subtle working

of the spiritual panorama that every one is somewhat conscious of, as apart from his ordinary life, the individual himself may *know* that this impression is given him from some one in the Unseen, yet it would be practically impossible to convince any one else of it.

It must always be recognized that spirituality of life and psychical gifts are not, necessarily, identical. Theoretically, at first glance, they might seem to be; in the highest form of psychical experiences they undoubtedly are closely allied; the psychic experience, if of a lofty order, is akin to aspiration, to noble aims, and to some realization of the diviner aspects of life. The response from the Unseen is clearest in exceptional moments.

O, loved the most when most I feel  
There is a lower and a higher,

sings Tennyson. That psychical experiences have the refining tendency is unmistakably true; yet it is also as true that many of the most spiritually-minded persons have never had any psychic experiences. Perhaps this statement should be qualified as that they have had no psychic experiences which they recognized as



such. Without doubt, they enjoy great and more or less unlimited communion of spirit. Yet love and longing instinctively reach out for something less intangible.

Communion in spirit! Forgive me,  
But I, who am earthy and weak,  
Would give all my incomes from dreamland  
For a touch of her hand on my cheek.

Lowell embodies an almost universal feeling in these lines. There is a natural longing for some definite word, some unmistakable sign or signal from the Beyond. For there is with almost every one a curious awareness of another order of life closely touching our own. It touches our own because man is, now and here, living this twofold life, and his spiritual self recognizes other spiritual selves who have withdrawn from the physical form. All perception of the unity of the physical and the ethereal realms lifts one to these higher levels of thought and feeling.

Our conscious activities seem to draw from some infinite and unmeasured store of energy from which we are separated by only the most impalpable barrier. "If a spiritual world exists, and if that world has at any epoch been mani-

fest or discoverable, then it ought to be manifest or discoverable now," said Frederick W. H. Myers. Science and spiritual insight have united to penetrate into the undiscovered, but not undiscoverable, realm. The unknown is not necessarily the unknowable.

The chief value of any conscious and intelligent communication that may be established between those in the Seen and in the Unseen lies not in the mere fact of the communication between two different conditions; it lies in its establishment of the larger relatedness of life. It lies in a new attitude toward life itself. It lies in recognizing the absolutely unbroken continuity of consciousness by the change we call death. Because this conviction reacts upon the work, the efforts, the aspirations, of every hour and every day. If the incompleteness of life on earth were inevitable, if death means some mysterious transition to uncomprehended conditions, bearing no evolutionary relation to the life on earth, whether one achieves a little more or a little less during his sojourn here hardly matters. For if that which one accomplishes to-day is definitely terminated by his going to sleep at night, and if, on awakening, he finds himself in an altogether

different world, where his work of yesterday is of no importance and to whose conditions it bears no relation, why the conclusion is obvious. But if that which he mastered yesterday is the beginning from which he proceeds in an unbroken line of still further achievement to-day, there is meaning and value in what he did yesterday. It is, therefore, all a question of life — life continuous, immortal, eternal. Our life on earth is something of significance that reaches through the infinite ages. Eternity is not a condition that we only enter upon by death; the present is just as much a part of eternity.

A retrospective glance over twenty years is somewhat of a daring venture. Yet life is a lovely thing, and its varied experiences must be estimated by the atmosphere through which we view them and the attitude in which we meet them. One gains, perhaps, a certain detachment from the immediate occurrence which, whether fortunate or unfortunate, may be regarded in a certain perspective that enables one's self to see it in larger relations than those of the moment. An apparent misfortune is not infrequently the appointed way of leading its recipient into greater good fortune. "When

your hands are made empty," said Emerson, "it is because God has better gifts with which to fill them." One door is closed that another may be opened. "We are escorted on every hand by spiritual agents, and a beneficent purpose lies in wait for us." Life is a spiritual drama, and we advance by a series of sequences. This series is a variable one; a given sequence may be surrounded with joyous circumstances, yet really leading to sorrow and disaster; another is invested with trial and difficulties, yet it proves to be the bridge conducting one to prosperous and happy conditions. So one learns not to distrust; not to rebel. He may safely confide in the spirit of the simple lines:

I see not a step before me, as I tread the paths of the  
year;  
But the Past is all in God's keeping; the Future  
His mercy shall clear,  
And that which seems dark in the distance may  
brighten as I draw near.

The series of sequences may be transfigured by thus lifting them to the spiritual plane, and growing into a higher and more perfect consciousness of the divine leading.

These past twenty years — at least the seventeen years leading up to that fateful date of August 1, 1914 — were a period of unparalleled human progress. Scientific advance extended itself into the ethereal world; for what is the wireless telegraphy of Marconi, or the long-distance telephony of Alexander Graham Bell and those of his associates who have contributed to the marvellous development of his invention, but the utilization of ethereal forces? It has been a period rich in literature. It has been a period of remarkable richness in the increasing spiritualization of life. It has been the inflorescence, so to speak, of results whose causes date backward into the previous half century.

Science, literature, economics, commercial expanse, great political changes — all these might well claim special attention, and all of them are a part of life and of its spiritual development in the largest sense of the term — will not be discussed here, though they might be most important, even to the theme itself, could they be adequately presented. Life is fairly encyclopædic and one must perforce limit himself to his selected theme. If there were no more valid argument for the infinite eternities of life

than that of the myriad directions to any one of which it might well be devoted, that argument itself would not be without claim. The great Darwin declared that no one life would suffice to exhaust the interest even in the study of earthworms alone. In the restricted connection, however, of the special interests directly related to the *Adventure Beautiful*, one is inclined to especially review the rise of modern spiritualism and the rise and progress of the theosophical movement which has lent to the spiritualistic philosophy its larger explanation and its more complete interpretation.

In the complex life of to-day it is difficult to reconstruct the interest that was aroused by the "rappings" produced by the mediumship of the Fox sisters, near Rochester, New York, in 1848. The interest extended itself to Europe, and in nearly all centers of life. Phenomena, mostly of a physical nature, sprang up in widely diverse places and under unexpected conditions. Thomas Adolphus Trollope relates that on one evening he, with Mrs. Trollope, had been present at a "circle" in Florence, where were also Mrs. Brown-ing and Mrs. Stowe, who was then visiting Italy. As the Trollopes entered their villa, in the Piazza

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di Indipendenza, Mr. Trollope remarked to his wife, casually laying his hand on a massive table, that he had no belief in the genuineness of the manifestations they had witnessed that evening and that he should as soon expect to see that table whirl around as to find any truth in the phenomena; whereupon the heavy table obligingly began to whirl, like a dancing dervish, before their astonished eyes. The phenomena of that period were more of the physical than now; it would seem as if the intention was to first arrest attention by means of the senses, as the more subtle methods of voice and writing would not, alone, have been equally convincing, but further evolution of the movement has been constantly in the direction of the appeal to the mind rather than to the senses. One of the extraordinary features of the time was that of the mediumship of David Douglas Home, whose apparent powers over earth and air revived the tales of magic in the mediæval ages. Mr. Home was invited by the Czar of Russia and by other crowned heads to hold séances before them, and much of the phenomena produced through his powers even yet remains unexplained. Reading backward, like the Chaldeans, from the

present age into these records of more than a half century ago, whose results have been so marked a feature within this last twenty years, it would seem that there was a great attempt on the spiritual side to arrest the attention of mortals; that its initial phases were to present marvels of nature, occurrences outside any known physical laws; as the lifting of a piano in the air with a man sitting on it; with the levitation of Mr. Home across a street, in the upper air; and with the rapping system for messages. Then came a period of finer and more subtle methods appealing to the mind and to the spiritual vision. This hypothesis, if not proven, may be reasonably tenable. Might it not be that when Jesus said to the people of His time that He had much more to tell but "Ye cannot bear it now", He referred to a more direct intercourse between the two realms, as one of the things to await a higher spiritual development of man, and that by the middle of the nineteenth century this development had come? Intimations from the Unseen there have always been, in one unbroken chain. Swedenborg was undoubtedly a specially-commissioned messenger, and many without his claim to scholarship have yet been the means of



contributing to the general enlightenment. The little instrument known as "Planchette" was invented by a French experimenter about 1860, and this form of communication became a popular amusement rather than a study pursued with seriousness of purpose. Under such intelligent scrutiny as that of Epes Sargent, much significance of messages became evident; but for those who merely sought idle amusement, the results were correspondingly frivolous. In all those years, however, mediumistic phenomena were largely in evidence, and there was a bewildering array of various kinds of communications, by the voice, by automatic writing, by rappings and also crystal-gazing and divinations of the future by various ingenious methods, all of which appealed to the people representative of many classes. Queen Victoria and the Empress Eugénie were among the interested experimenters. Many persons of note, as William and Mary Howitt, Sir William Crookes, and others had notable experiences. Intimations of supernormal power occurred to many who were not consciously pursuing the theme. Madame la Baronne Faverot de Kerbrech, the widow of the famous French General, related to me an incident in the

life of her husband. General Baron de Kerbrech was a warm friend of the young Prince Napoleon, the son of Empress Eugénie, and one morning while riding with his troops in northern Africa, near Algiers, he was suddenly conscious of an intense anxiety and depression. He telegraphed to the Baroness, who was then in London, fearing some ill had befallen her, but found she was well. Later the General learned that it was on that date that his youthful friend, the Prince, met his death, and he always accounted for the wave of sadness that swept over him by that loss. The mediumistic gift of sensitive response to influences is that of a majority of people.

The Theosophical Society, founded in New York by Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky in 1868, had its origin, in part, in the spiritualistic phenomena then taking place in New England, which Madame Blavatsky carefully studied. Even the instruction of "the Masters" of whom so much is said, is a part of these phenomena. All these movements and the waves of popular interest incited by them kept the subject of spiritual communications before the people. In 1882 the interest had become so marked a feature of the general life as to lead to the founding of

the Society for Psychical Research, of which Henry Sidgwick was the first president, and with which Professor William F. Barrett (now Sir William), with Edmund Gurney, Frederick W. H. Myers, Sir Oliver Lodge, and later William James, and Henri Bergson, have all been closely identified.

Any résumé of the past twenty years thus necessarily penetrates into the period of a generation before. By 1890 the decline of materialism had become marked, and before nineteen hundred there was not wanting testimony to a world newborn. There was a distinctive inflorescence of national and international life; a fresh vitality that tended to transform economics, science, even religion itself, into a nobler development. It was more generally realized that the best results of religious exaltation were not *in* exaltation, save as a fountain of enthusiasm and richness from which to draw; but that the true witness of communion with the Holy Spirit was in the effort to better the lot of the community. The lessons of religion did not limit themselves to fervor and ecstasy, but fulfilled themselves in love and service. Social settlements were established. Jane Addams had led the way,

and the appreciation of her noble and intelligent treatment of the problems of poverty and ignorance incited many followers and coworkers. Human helpfulness prevailed. Service was the watchword of the day. Not that an Utopia had dawned. There were grave evils, there were individual and national sins and offences, but the trend was toward more sympathetic and beneficent human relations. How much of this was due to the great and inspiring preachers of those days only the Recording Angel may be able to estimate. But such men as Horace Bushnell, Charles Grandison Finney, Henry Ward Beecher, James Freeman Clarke, Edward Everett Hale, Charles Gordon Ames, Phillips Brooks, Malthie Davenport Babcock, Samuel Fallows, Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, Basil Wilberforce, E. Winchester Donald, generated currents of nobler life to a degree incalculable.

Poetry and art poured forth their inspirations. The traditional materialism of the preceding period began to give way; Darwin's epoch-making discovery of Evolution was seen by the more enlightened thinkers as a theory not hostile to religious truth, but coördinating with it. Canon Lyddon gave his inspiring teaching and his clar-

ion call to the higher nature of man; Mallock devastated the materialistic interpretation with his inimitable wit and ridicule. Archdeacon Wilberforce, Lady Henry Somerset and Frances Willard arose to lead the reform for temperance. Percival Lowell, whose unsurpassed genius for original researches in the stellar universe was fairly divination, and whose patient devotion to science was only equalled by the transcendent brilliancy of his gifts, was making an invaluable contribution to knowledge by his study of the aspects of Mars, from the Lowell Observatory in the crystal atmosphere of Arizona, where now, —

“Under the blue and starry sky”,  
rests his mortal body.

For him the Architect of all  
Unroofed our planet's starlit hall;  
Through voids unknown to worlds unseen  
His clearer vision rose serene.  
To him the wandering stars revealed  
The secrets in their cradle sealed.

The original initiator of a trend of speculative outlook now crystallized under the name of “New Thought” was Prentice Mulford who, in the

late eighties, issued in Boston a little monthly monograph, in a fifteen-cent form, with such titles as "Your Forces and how to Use Them;" "Thoughts Are Things"; "You Travel When You Sleep", and kindred subjects. With no pretensions to literary style, these little booklets were yet written in a clear and simple manner, and many years later, under the title of the "White Cross" Library, the volumes into which they were collected found wide recognition.

The experience of Stainton Moses was also a factor in the thought of that period. He was a clergyman of the Church of England, an Oxford graduate, ordained by Bishop Wilberforce, who, in his student days, had once passed six months in solitary life on Mount Athos. The communications that are now published in the volume entitled "Spirit-Teachings" came directly to Mr. Moses. They began in 1872, the earlier ones bearing first the signature of "Doctor" then later that of "Rector"; and finally came writings over the signature of "Imperator" which Mr. Moses said initiated a distinct epoch in his life. The especial significance of these messages lay in that they entirely combated his own beliefs. "Spirit-Teachings" thus consists of a pre-

sentation of the convictions of Mr. Moses, as he wrote them, and the reply (written through his hand) of the invisible friend in attendance. There can hardly be a question of the value of this book to all the literature of spiritualism. The literary quality is fine; the questions and objections made by Mr. Moses are met with the utmost scholarly dignity, liberal knowledge, and exaltation of spirit by the unseen Communicator. The intelligence that gave the name of Imperator became, as is familiar to all students of psychical research, the guide that directed the séances with Mrs. Piper through many years, and Imperator was always assisted by Rector and Doctor. These constitute what is known as the "Imperator Group." Stainton Moses was intensely opposed to spiritualism; and it was this state of mind that incited Imperator, whose writing is of an exceptionally noble character, to argue the case with the clergyman. A typical illustration of the spirit of Imperator's writings is the following:

We do not desire to give a long line of incoherent statements; on the contrary, we desire to teach thee all about God and His divine and wondrous workings during the past, middle, and present ages.

Again :

It would be impossible to explain for the understanding of mortal minds what the word love really means. It is the divine essence of God Himself. Man, where the spirit of love is not in him, is not *en rapport* with God.

It has been believed by many of the more eminent of the Society for Psychical Research that Imperator is he who was known on earth as Saint Augustine; and for this conviction there is much evidence that cannot be gone into here.

An impulse of ethical thought that has made itself a controlling force during these past twenty years is the Theosophical movement. Although the Society was founded in New York in 1868, it only began to be more prominently recognized from the first visit of Annie Besant to this country in 1891. Theosophy has been destined to work a modifying change in all religious thought. Even where it is not consciously recognized, it acts as a leaven. It presents so reasonable an explanation of the conditions under which we live, and one that so supplements Christian ideals, that it is little wonder that this more complete



hypothesis of the nature, origin, and destiny of the soul has entered largely into the general thought of the period. The signs of a closing age, that since the August of 1914 have grown increasingly arresting to the thoughtful observer, were discernible before the end of the nineteenth century. The later years of the decade of 1890-1900 manifested a rush of activities and such extraordinary expansion in important departments of human advance that the customary channels were insufficient and inadequate to bear it along. The spectacle was not unlike that of a mighty river so reinforced by swiftly entering tributaries that its banks could no longer conduct the current in its accustomed channel. To the dweller on the watch-tower it was evident that the long-appointed ways must change into new and untrodden paths. The law of progress, relentless and inevitable as is the law of gravitation, implies and includes, by sheer necessity, the law of change as well. If a movement, or a nation, reaches its zenith of development, the next step is downward. The downward direction need not necessarily be one of denials or defeat; it is the descent of the hill to climb a still higher slope; to gain a loftier height; but

to the limited vision it is retrogression. A transition age is one of encouragement and of joyous confidence when seen in its larger completeness; but without its perspective, the reverse is true. When there comes a time that the great intellectual and ethical activities of the world seem arrested; when the universities are forsaken for training camps; when libraries and art galleries are deserted for economic and for hospital service, it is little wonder that humanity asks if this deadlock in all that makes for the larger and the higher life of man is not the portent of the decay of nations? Not so. It is the liberation of other powers; it is the crisis whose very exigencies stimulate latent nobility heretofore hardly recognized. There is no need of chapter and verse to make clear this truth. Perhaps the greatest service rendered by the enlarging view of life brought in by Theosophy was the ideal of brotherhood. For any ethical ideal that is planted in the thought of men has its vitality in the ethereal realm, and it becomes a force invincible to change the entire panorama of living. The action follows the ideal as the plant follows the seed. Socialism, with great truths to offer, has not yet worked out a practicable and benefi-

cent economic scheme. The economic scheme is so complicated that many suggested reforms, admirable in themselves, would yet, by the inevitable laws of trades and activities, work evils to one class while working good for another. The tendency of the time, a quarter of a century ago, to seize upon any idea for a more ideal scheme of life is illustrated by the eager reception given to the scheme presented in the guise of fiction in Edward Bellamy's "Looking Backward", a romance still perpetuated by the very able and interesting Bellamy Club of Boston. Thought is the power that changes all the outer environment. Socialism has its contribution and no inconsiderable one to make; but its best economic truths, when merged in the truth of the brotherhood of humanity, acquire a plasticity and an adaptability and so ally themselves with a diviner ideal as to offer a more favorable vantage ground for the working out of human destiny. It is this contribution that Theosophy offered to the world of twenty years and more ago; not a perfected scheme; not a pattern to be literally followed and to which the multifold activities of life could be adjusted; but a suggestion of an ideal to hold in vision.

Ah, your Fouriers failed  
Because not poets enough to understand  
That life develops from within.

Man, being a spiritual entity, cannot adjust his complete life to plans limited to the natural world. They must also make room for the life of the spiritual development. The spiritual significance of life forever burns through "the hieroglyphic of material shows." It is the larger metaphysics that must help our physics. The complicated problems of production and distribution must be so adjusted as to lift the burden of poverty and privations on the one hand, and to lift the burden (equally dangerous and insidious) of luxurious self-indulgence on the other. There can be no over-night, ready-while-you-wait system of moral economics worked out that will adjust itself to the surging demands. But when the change begins in thought, in character, in the opening of the consciousness to an entirely higher expression of life as a whole, then will the new type of humanity itself begin.

One of the potent influences that slightly antedated these past twenty years, but that projected itself into the indefinite future, was the splendid Exposition at Chicago to which reference has

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already been made in its notable feature of the Parliament of Religions. The Exposition was a great educational event. It inaugurated a new era in the attitude of the American people toward art. It inspired a new spirit among its creators. The scientific, economic, and industrial aspects of the Exposition enlarged international sympathies and relations; its many congresses, representative of nearly all departments of knowledge, contributed signally to the liberation of the spirit. As the dawn of the twentieth century approached, commerce continued to expand, even to the inclusion of the uttermost parts of the earth. An era of foreign travel set in, and the nations became acquainted with each other as never before. They became familiar with each other's customs, habits, national and individual preferences. They came to a growing comprehension of the life as well as the language and the literature of foreign lands. The university plan of exchange professorships between the institutions of learning of the more notable order contributed incalculably to the sense of brotherhood. To understand is the first step toward a wise coöperation. University ideals exhibited a new vitality and splendid expansion,

led largely by the genius and the wisdom of Charles W. Eliot, then president of Harvard, whose administrative period perpetuates its best traditions in the present administration of President Lowell. International sympathies stimulate international appreciations. The cheery optimist of those days of twenty years ago had good reason for the faith that was in him. If the kingdom of heaven was not, literally, at hand, he, at least, entered into the exhilarating spirit expressed by Edward Everett Hale in his characteristic phrase: "God's kingdom must come, and it is our business to see that it comes." In those years every one went about his occupations cheerfully and took his recreations — not sadly. The decade of the nineties was marked by great dramatic and musical successes; as a period when remarkable artists of the lyric and the dramatic stage enchanted the amusement-going public. In the decade of the nineties began the expansion of electrical power destined to develop to marvellous proportions, with the revelation that each marvel disclosed only led to greater ones beyond. It hardly seems credible now that it was as late as the spring of 1898 when, in the Jardin des Tuileries, in Paris,

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there was a great exhibition of motor cars, which people visited with the curious interest that would now attend an exhibition of airships. And it was just after 1900 that the miracle of miracles was wrought in the first wireless message that crossed the ocean. Of course at the moment it was generally believed that Marconi was deceived, and many learned explanations were presented to account for the seeming message otherwise than by aërial vibration. There was general activity and cheerful prosperity among the nations. There was happiness among the people. There were overflowing sympathy and generous aid for misfortune. The two terrible earthquakes at San Francisco and at Messina met an instant response of lavish aid. When in 1912 Greece was under the hardships of war, men and help in every way were freely dispatched to her. When in the April of 1912, the S.S. *Titanic* went down, what an outpouring of sympathy and what a wave of vital faith in the "life more abundant" swept over the civilized world! Despite some internal wars among the nations of the earth, and industrial conflicts, with frequent strikes, difficulties, and differences, yet, in a general sense the time was characterized by peaceful progress.

Literature flourished, and the more important contributions to it took their place among the recognized events of the day. Poetry and philosophy assumed the dignity of pursuits. Mural art, whose creations had for centuries past been so marked a feature of continental beauty, began to establish itself in our country; and when the magnificent Library of Congress was planned in Washington, the great artists of the world were called in to adorn it with painting and sculpture. Quite aside from the splendor of its architectural and artistic beauty, the significance and usefulness of the Library of Congress was insured by calling that genius among the great Librarians of the world, Herbert Putnam, Litt.D., LL.D., to be its administrative Librarian. Too much stress could hardly be laid on this felicitous choice. The administration of Doctor Putnam has made this noble Library one of the world centers of intellectual and literary productiveness.

A twenty years' retrospect discloses such contrasts between the general life of that period and of the present as to suggest a gulf of almost as many centuries instead. Despite some minor evils, or those that seem minor in the light of



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to-day; despite more or less injustice that invested the labor problem, and numerous wrongs, defects, maladjustments, humanity still plunged forward at somewhat of a happy-go-lucky pace, and new inventions, new political policies, new movements in art, a new realism in literature, all contributed their energy to the national life. The conditions were very far from being perfect, but they seemed to be favorable to an increasing approach toward individual and national ideals. To look backward on these — this period that chronologically is separated from us by less than three years at this writing — is still something like looking across a chasm of the ages; like surveying a lost paradise; and inclines the individual to fairly question his own identity as to whether he can possibly be the self he remembers as if existing in a dim and remote past. Is he the victim of some Merlin who has thrown upon him a spell from which he cannot escape? Is he the victim of delusions? Or was it a pre-existence he seems to recall before that blinding midnight in the late summer days of 1914, when the world plunged into a chaos of horror? The world that came to an end with the last night of the July of that year seems to us now as remote

and almost as legendary as that in which dwelt King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. In the winter of 1914-1915, we asked ourselves if any of the pleasant things we seemed to recall as belonging to 1913-1914 had ever really happened at all? The two succeeding winters have but added to and deepened this chasm that so suddenly opened. The world that existed before the breaking out of the war seems receding in time — wraith-like, phantasmal, a dream, a faint reminiscence as of some preëxistence —

As a life lived somewhere, — I know not  
On what diviner shore.

It has become increasingly difficult to keep the degree of rational poise essential to living at all, to hold one's bearings and pick his way through a chaotic and unbelievable universe whose conditions are strangely remote from those of the happy confident days when life was invigorated with the conviction that God's kingdom must come, and that it was his individual responsibility to assist in its coming; that he was in the world for the purpose of contributing all his personal aid, and identifying his

personal being with this ideal. Still, more than ever must man refuse to give way to doubt and despair. Let him hold fast the faith that "There is always a power in Today to rival and to re-create the beautiful Yesterday." One must launch his bark and set his sail by the star under which he finds himself, not by those that have gone down behind the horizon. "Civilization is a failure," cries the pessimist: "Christianity is a failure." To which a wit replied that Christianity cannot be said to be a failure, as it has never been tried! But what is to be done when a life, a nation, or a world are in ruins? Shall one merely contemplate the spectacle in the apathy of despair, or the bitterness of vengeance? Shall he relinquish his "job" — which is that of noble and manly living? Shall he sit down amid chaos and ruin and emulate Nero? On the contrary. He must summon up all his power of will, all his intensity of devotion to those things that make for the true life. The outcome of chaotic conditions is not chaos; it is creation! The outcome of failure is not ruin, but a greater success! The outcome of desolation and sorrow is not a greater tribulation; it is Happiness! If we tread the Wilderness to-day

it is that we shall be able to tread the Promised Land to-morrow. There is one power, absolute and invincible in the universe, and that is the divine will; and when man links with that divine will his own will, he too partakes of the invincible power. The task of 1917 is not the alluring task of 1900; nor even of 1913; but who shall say that it is not invested with a holier purpose?

Theosophy is not the only religious cult that has developed in power for usefulness and grasp on the great realities of life within these past twenty years. Christian Science has become an even more widely recognized power, with a genius for organization that is almost unparalleled. Its beneficent effect upon health and temperament and poise of life is so marked that it is no wonder that a just and liberally-minded man like the late William James (most eminent of psychologists) should go before the Legislature of Massachusetts to plead that no arbitrary legislation should be brought against the methods of healing by Christian Science. The movement known as New Thought allies itself with a beneficent optimism and a practically applied faith in the divine leading. The Bahai revelation makes its contribution of tolerance,

and of the elimination of rivalries of sect or creed, — a universal love of all which makes for righteousness. If it be said, and quite truly said, that this attitude is not new to the Christian faith, it can also be as truly said that if a general truth is stamped by a particular restatement that emphasizes it to many people, there is no cause for regret. Let us rejoice and be glad of every phase of the recognition of diviner truth and love. We can never have too much of it. When Abdul Baha, "Servant of God", visited London in the autumn of 1911, he was reverently received as one of the great religious leaders of the time; and few who were present on the evening when the Venerable Basil Wilberforce, Archdeacon of Westminster, invited the Persian prophet to speak in his church can ever forget the impressiveness of Abdul Baha's address, and the beauty of the scene. That the devout Persian is a true "Servant of God" is attested by the spirit of his life.

Theosophy has introduced into Christianity what may be termed a technical explanation of much of the mystery of human life; and which, when interpreted aright, is supplementary, not contradictory, to the teachings of the New Testa-

ment. It is highly spiritual in its teachings. A typical exposition of the theosophical attitude may be seen in the following paragraph from the writings of Annie Besant :

Learn compassion, learn tenderness, learn good thoughts of others, rather than evil ; learn to be tender with the weak, learn to be reverent to the great, and if you can develop these qualities in you, then the coming Christ may be able to number you among His disciples, and the welcome that the earth shall give Him shall not again be a cross.

The education of the soul concerning the universe in which it finds itself may be drawn from a great number of diverse sources, each offering somewhat of aid. It can hardly fail of being recognized that within this past twenty years the world has made signal progress toward the larger achievement of the diviner element in life. In the industrial world and in that of economics, in the general movements of the time, the basis of action is that of integrity, of personal reliability, of mutual consideration and confidence. Humanity is still in the making ; still far from realizing the ideal of life, but, as Doctor Holmes observed, "It matters less where one

stands than in what direction he is moving." Even in the tragic conditions of the present, humanity may well hold fast to the profound truth that by the path of tribulation is the spirit led to eternal glory.

At all events humanity has now its appointed task to confront. It is peculiarly and inescapably our task. We are, by circumstances, the inhabitants of two distinct epochs of civilization, whose contrast is so great as to make them seem like two different and widely-separated ages. Our business is now with the period in which we find ourselves; to make it better, to bring to bear on it new and finer harmonies of life. For it is into the region of new and finer forces that we must now enter. Old conditions are all being swept away to make room for the new. The new conditions must have a larger grasp on unseen realities, a clearer vision of the interpenetration and the interrelatedness of the realms of the Seen and the Unseen. It is the significance of the eternities that gives meaning to time. It is only from the basis of the continuity of life that the course of progressive advance can be reckoned.

Spiritualism, as a cult, stands out less distinctly in that it has penetrated more deeply

and in a more subtle manner into nearly every form of revealed religion. The term is an elastic one, but when divested of some undesirable phases which have crept in, as they creep into all organizations, it stands for the order of teaching that pervades the New Testament in a remarkable degree. The discoveries and the affirmations of Spiritualism were the cause and the basis of the founding of the Society for Psychical Research, whose learned labors have resulted in compelling this body of scholars and thinkers to adopt, for the most part, the assertions and the convictions of the spiritualists. The two names stand, to quite a degree, for a distinction without a difference. Alfred Russel Wallace, one of the greatest of modern biologists, frankly accepted the spiritualist interpretation before the Society for Psychical Research came into existence. The entire life of Doctor Wallace was a vigorous protest against materialism and against a selfish worldliness. "Materialism", he said, "is as dead as priestcraft, for all intelligent minds. Everywhere we are confronted by power and intelligence. The future will be one of wonder, reverence, and of calm faith, worthy of our place in the scheme of things. . . .



My answer is made as a man of science, a naturalist, and a student of surroundings. . . . In the very smallest operations of nature to which human observation has penetrated, there is purpose and continual guidance and control. . . . I believe it to be the guidance of beings superior to us in power and intelligence, call them what you will. . . ."

Man is so created as to be a distributor of divine power. When he recognizes that he may enter on a conscious and intelligent participation with cosmic law, he assumes his true relation to the universe and becomes a sharer of that invincible power, pervading all space, which is the divine will, a power that man can no more successfully oppose than he can the power of gravitation.

Psychical research has, within the past twenty years, offered a peculiarly extensive and diversified field for the psychologist, whose work is of the scientific rather than of the emotional trend; an order of work that while it includes much of the aims of the purely spiritualistic seeker, so broadens and extends the field of exploration as to carry psychology to a higher level. This field, which invited James and Myers,

who have left such fascinating records of their explorations therein, is now, by common consent of the scientific world, the especial domain of that brilliant and profound psychologist, James Hervey Hyslop, who is carrying all former incursions into this subject on to far more widely-related truth. Only by the exceptional few is the remarkable work conducted by Doctor Hyslop at all adequately recognized. Familiar with all phases of abnormal psychology; eminent in philosophy (holding this chair for some years in Columbia University) and uniting with his scholar's equipment an impassioned interest in the actual proof or disproof of communication between the two realms of life, Doctor Hyslop is leading — is practically inaugurating, so original are his methods — a movement which it were hardly an exaggeration to call one of the most significant and inclusive of the age. For the power of every individual life is multiplied indefinitely by gaining a clear and well-defined conception of its relations to the unseen universe. Events and movements have their origin in the ethereal world. In proportion as the vision of man discerns this truth is he enabled to act with coherent and intelligent energy. It is the recog-

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nition by means of which life becomes effective. Humanity has advanced into a new stage of progress and must adjust itself to wider horizons. Achievements may be hastened or delayed, according to the ability to catch the vision and to respond to the voice. For the secret of all hope and happiness, the key to every portal that opens to the eternal glory, the accelerated pace toward all diviner conditions lie within man's own decision as he journeys on to the more intimate union of the soul with God.

## CHAPTER IV

### SOME PSYCHICAL EXPERIENCES

"I have said elsewhere that spiritualism is not a form of religion, for, so far as it is a realization of the great facts of God and immortality, it is religion itself. It proves the existence of ethereal beings exercising a preterhuman power over matter. Nay, it proves that our friends who have died are still alive, and, inferentially, that there must be a spirit world, however impenetrable to mortal sense." EPES SARGENT.

"After the dissolution of the body, a man's spirit appears in the spiritual world in the human form altogether as in the natural world. . . . When a man enters on the life after death he sees as before; he hears and speaks as before; and when he is touched he feels as before. He also longs, thinks, reflects, loves, and wills as before." SWEDENBORG.

THE advancement made within the past fifty years may be, in some measure, estimated by the implied concession of Mr. Sargent, in the quotation given above from some of his writings in the decade of 1860-

1870, that "inferentially, there must be a spirit-world, however impenetrable to mortal sense." To-day it is by no means altogether impenetrable. Man is beginning to hold very definite conceptions of the conditions, and even the locality in space, of this spiritual sphere. The discoveries of Sir Oliver Lodge as to the nature of the ether have contributed signally to some intelligent perception of a realm discerned more by faith than by sight in the days of Epes Sargent, and a consensus of communications, after the elimination of much vagary, throws some light on the quest. Psychic experiences are more a component part of daily and universal experiences than is commonly recognized; and they are not more unusual than are visits or letters from friends in this world. In a general sense all life is psychic experience, for it is in a spiritual environment and dominated by spiritual forces. The basis of all life, the ultimate reality, is this spiritual realm. Withdraw spiritual power from the world, and what have we? Merely dead matter. There is nothing incredible in the possibility of communication between two spiritual beings, one still in, and the other having 'withdrawn from, the physical body.

The marvel would be if all communication between them were cut off. Many of the complicated explanations offered to account for some phenomenon are more of a tax on one's credulity than the phenomenon itself, and much perception of truth has been obscured by the partial grasp of matters included in abnormal psychology. It is a signal case in which a "little learning" becomes a "dangerous thing." One gains a glimmering but incomplete idea of "cosmic reservoirs", of "multiple personalities", of telepathy and thought transference—and heaven knows what beside—all of which, when discussed by the psychologist, have their significance; but which, without a special grounding in philosophy and psychology, become meaningless and distorted phrases. It is in part this reason that has made the writings of Sir Oliver Lodge, who approached the subject of communion between the two states from the standpoint of the physicist rather than from that of the psychologist, so direct and magnetic in their general appeal. It was this danger of becoming involved in mere phrases that constrained Frederick Myers to seek the simplest form of expression in his great work entitled

"Human Personality." Mr. Myers specifically notes that he does not feel that we are justified "in using any nomenclature which assumes that we possess a deeper knowledge of what is going on than the messages themselves give us. I do not mean," he continues, "that we ought to accept the messages unquestioningly. We know of various *veræ causæ* — conscious or unconscious fraud, self-suggestion, telepathy between the living, and the like, which we are bound to regard as possibly operative, and which enable us to resolve many automatic messages into mere illustrations of agencies previously known. But I mean that *where* we get beyond these simple causes, where we are forced to accept the messages as representing in some way the continued identity of a former denizen of earth, I do not think that tradition or philosophy affords us any solid standpoint from which to criticise those messages."

This counsel applied to language may also be applied to the manifestations that language is used to describe. The initial step toward a full comprehension of a possible larger truth is first to assume that they are what they purport to be. If that hypothesis fails, then another

may be sought. As an extremely interesting illustration, take this message purporting to be from William Stead that came through the psychical power of Madame de Meissner of Washington and Petrograd. As will be recalled, Mr. Stead went down with the *Titanic* on April 15, 1912. On April 18 this message came; but the *Carpathia*, with the survivors of the tragedy aboard, did not reach New York until April 20, so it was not till two days after the message was received that its contents could be verified. Madame de Meissner is the daughter of the late Admiral Radford, U. S. N., and the widow of a Russian diplomat. She is a woman of purely social life, the life of great embassies and courts, but she has the psychic gift. There was therefore no problem of professional mediumship connected with this matter. Madame de Meissner and Mr. Stead were friends through a somewhat long correspondence, as his work and ideas greatly interested her, and her sympathetic responsiveness to them added to the interest and enjoyment of the well-known English publicist, but personally they had never met. On this eighteenth of April then, there was suddenly written, through Madame de Meissner's



hand, a message signed William Stead, to the effect that after a little period of unconsciousness he found himself, with many of his fellow passengers, standing on a green hillside, and the group were discussing the chances of a ship to take them off. They seemed to realize that they had been shipwrecked. At that moment Mr. Stead's son came to him, and they entered into conversation, when suddenly he observed to his son, "Why, how strange it is that we can be talking together in this way!" The son replied, "No, it is not strange, for you are over here, you know, now, father." Apparently this rejoinder amazed Mr. Stead. "I looked down at myself," he wrote, in this automatic message; "I looked just as I always had, and I said, 'It cannot be true.'" His son convinced him that it was true, and Mr. Stead went among the others and said to them: "My friends, we have passed through what we call death. We are in what we have always called 'the other world.'" And he went on to state that the group were much disturbed, and rebuked him, saying, "Mr. Stead, death is too sacred a subject to jest about; do not talk to us in this way."

Madame de Meissner had no means of knowing

whether Mr. Stead was among those rescued and on board the *Carpathia*, or whether he had passed into the next stage of life as he asserted that he had, until two days later, when the steamer reached New York, and the fact of his death was rendered probable by his nonappearance among the passengers, which fact was soon verified. This instance has peculiar claim to interest, both from the character of the mediumistic power through which it came, and from the personality and character of Mr. Stead. It also tends to establish the probability of that which is often asserted, that many persons do not in the least realize, at first, that they have passed the great change, so natural are the surroundings in which they find themselves. Through a medium William James has said that he could not believe he was what we call "dead"; and that he had to be shown his lifeless body lying on the bed before he could accept it as true.

It will be recalled that Frank D. Millet, an artist of distinction, a writer of literary rank, and especially notable as a man with the most unusual genius for friendship, also met his death by the tragedy of the *Titanic*. A sister of Mr. Millet's (Mrs. Sylvester Baxter, the wife of the

poet and publicist) a woman of the choicest gifts, passed on into the Unseen on New Year's Day of 1917, in a manner so sudden and totally unforeseen as to be really translation rather than death. A moment before she was talking and laughing with her husband; but the action of the heart failed. Within a short time after her passing, I was in Washington when, one morning, my friend, Madame de Meissner, came in. Suddenly she said, "Why, there is some one here who wants to write." Then came this message from Mrs. Baxter, which must be given in her exact words, as to divest it of its colloquial quality would be to destroy its significance as evidence. "I was never so surprised in my life," she wrote, addressing me by name. "I could not think what had happened to me! But Brother Frank came and took me right in his arms." Now Madame de Meissner, at the time of this sudden message, had never known even the name of Mrs. Baxter and still less the circumstances investing her death which had occurred less than a week before this morning. The curiously evidential thing in the message, aside from its vivid allusion to her sudden passing, is the use of the term "Brother."

To this eldest son she invariably referred with the prefix of "Brother"; while the two younger, (Joseph B. Millet, the publisher, and Charles Millet, M.D.) were always spoken of by her by their christian names alone. The eldest was invariably "*Brother Frank*" to her, and here was the same phrasing in the message.

The apology for using personal names so freely in any narration of psychical messages is that to veil these messages in an impersonality is to deprive them of much of their claim as evidence. It would tend to confuse the issues. The noble sincerity and simple frankness of Sir Oliver Lodge in his "*Raymond; or Life and Death*" constitutes a precedent that any writer on these topics may well follow. In approaching any study of these themes, the persons interested, readers and writer, meet as friends in counsel, to compare and discuss experiences, and to this end a degree of what seems at times an almost startling frankness is fairly essential.

William Stead was so identified with investigations and experiences in this field that it is not strange that many phenomena are associated with his life. In the early autumn of 1911, Mr. Stead set forth on his mission to the Sultan of

Turkey with reference to ending the war then existing between Turkey and Greece. He stopped for a few days in Paris in order to consult with the Turkish Embassy and to obtain letters to the Sultan and to other prominent persons. It chanced that he came to the same hotel where a friend of his and also of my own, Donna Roma Lister, and I were lingering; and on the eve of his departure for Constantinople he invited Donna Roma and myself to have tea with him over our parting talk. Included in the group was also another lady, a highly-accomplished linguist, who was on terms of familiarity with the Turkish language, and who had thus been assisting in his interviews with the Embassy of that nation in Paris. This lady had lived for many years in Constantinople (she was the daughter of an American diplomat commissioned to our Embassy in that city) and she also had a remarkable psychic gift. Nothing, one may fancy, was farther from our thoughts as we sat around the tea table talking with Mr. Stead than any psychical manifestation; but suddenly the linguist became entranced, and a voice addressed itself to the eminent editor and publicist. Let it be remembered that this was in the late September,

preceding the April of the following spring, when Mr. Stead went down on the *Titanic*. The message given to him that afternoon was to the effect that a very wonderful experience lay before him; a work of a far greater character than anything before in his life; that it involved new issues, lifted him to higher and more commanding levels, and was fairly revolutionary in its aspects. We were all persons more or less familiar with psychic phenomena and to a great degree believers in its genuineness; but (to speak for myself) the very extravagance of this prophecy (as it seemed at the moment) cancelled its significance. The nobility and the greatness of Mr. Stead were, of course, accepted facts; but in the light of human probabilities it did not seem rational to suppose that any such radical and startling transformation in the life of a man already past middle age was likely to occur. But read now in the light of his tragic transition to the life more abundant that awaited him within the next seven months, the forecasting seems very natural. Such a man as Mr. Stead would inevitably enter on a far more significant phase of achievement than any that had been possible to him here. This incident is possibly

alluded to in Edith Harper's biography of Mr. Stead, as I related it to my friend, Miss Harper, with full permission to make any use of it she might wish.

Several communications of unusual claim to interest were given (through the mediumship of Mrs. Piper) for Mrs. Mary A. Livermore, in some of the séances that Doctor Hodgson had arranged for me to have, soon after the death of her husband, the Reverend Daniel Parker Livermore, D.D. A portion of these messages, with a letter of her own, are published in a book<sup>1</sup> appearing in 1900, but the following incident has not before been made public.

With the hope of conveying something of comfort to Mrs. Livermore, I had asked if Doctor Livermore could come? The hand wrote that he was present, and then came a message that, while natural, contained no absolute proof of identity. For this proof I asked, and the line was written, "Ask her if she remembers the Browning I gave her?" As a test this seemed to me singularly unsatisfactory. "The Browning?" But an intellectual and literary house-

<sup>1</sup> "The Spiritual Significance." Boston, Little, Brown and Company.

hold like that of the Livermores would undoubtedly have many volumes of the poems of both Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning. To indicate one only, as if that were the sole "Browning" in their library, was to suppose the improbable. However, the test was duly submitted to Mrs. Livermore, and her reply was as surprising as it was reassuring. The letter is dated Melrose, Massachusetts, December 11, 1899, and it runs :

You say Mr. Livermore asked me through Mrs. Piper if I remembered the Browning he gave me? Two days after our marriage (May 3, 1845), Mr. Livermore gave me Mrs. Browning's volume entitled "A Drama of Exile and Other Poems." This is the only Browning he ever gave me and is the only volume of either of the Brownings that we ever had in the house.

The date is not merely a matter of memory. I have copied the date from the fly-leaf of the volume where my name is written. These volumes are so marked by my husband and myself, as we read, with marginal notes, etc., that I could not loan them to any one. Robert Browning had no recognition in this country at that time. Mr. Livermore tried to read him, but found him too obscure.

You need to know all the story. You see we were



young, just married, and poor. We could muster only eight hundred dollars between us, and his salary was but six hundred. I earned a hundred and fifty or two hundred dollars a year more by teaching special classes in our rooms, and by writing stories and little books for children. We wanted to go to housekeeping immediately, to have a home of our own, a pretty one, but simple, and had agreed to economize in all ways, and especially not to buy new books, except such as were absolutely necessary in his profession. And yet in two days he came home with an armful for me, among which were these poems of Mrs. Browning, and was as gleeful over it as a boy. I kept a sort of watch over him after that and he did not buy any more books immediately. He would say, "It is four weeks (or six or more, as might be) since I brought you Mrs. Browning's poems; can't we afford another new book now?"

I feel confident that this is the volume he refers to, and I regard it as an extremely good test. You see, there was occasion for his remembering Mrs. Browning's poems, and I feel confident this was the book referred to. . . .

In another letter (under date of December 31, 1901) Mrs. Livermore wrote :

What an explanation to this life is that beyond! That gives this its meaning. As you say, "This is a

spiritual world." Mr. Livermore said to me the other day (through the mediumship of Mrs. Soule) "You believe that we in this unseen world influence you in the earth life. But let me assure you that you influence us just as much, help us, and stimulate us. . . . How much I have learned these last two years! How much I have gained in peace and serenity!

Somewhat later Mrs. Livermore again wrote:

The conviction that the two worlds interpenetrate each other has grown very strong with me during the past year, and I often feel the nearness of some one who has passed out of the earthly life.

Jevons, in his "Principles of Science," says: "For anything that we can know to the contrary, there may be, right here and now, passing through us and this world, some planet invisible to us, with mountains, oceans, lakes, rivers, cities, and inhabitants." And Doctor Young also suggests that there are worlds perhaps pervading each other, unseen, in the same space. I wonder that more attention is not given to the speculations of these great thinkers.

Psychical experiences often form a series of sequences, very evidently linked together, and closely inter-related. One of these that lends itself to narration was the sequence that fol-

lowed a note I received from Edward Everett Hale, in Paris, in the summer of 1896. From his Boston home he wrote :

. . . Susan (his sister) tells me that the death of Kate Field will be a great loss to you. I write to tell you that I am sorry. I did not know Miss Field. I hope I shall know her.

The inference was as natural as if a mutual friend had gone to Chicago, or San Francisco, where he too expected to go later, and hoped they might then meet. The years passed on till, some time about 1909, Doctor Hale's death occurred. Within a year or two afterward Doctor Hyslop came in one day from one of his séances in prosecuting his studies in psychical research and remarked that he had that morning received from Edward Everett Hale a strange message for me, which was to the effect that he had seen Kate Field and that "she was the most adventurous spirit he had ever met in a feminine body." Across an interval of some fifteen or sixteen years, the note written and the message through the psychic stand in logical sequence to each other. Knowing nothing of the note, Doctor Hyslop found the message fantastic and

unrelated to anything he had received ; but with the note, it became intelligible and highly significant.

Archdeacon Wilberforce had a few séances with a noted American medium, Mrs. Etta Wriedt, of Detroit, whom Mr. Stead had invited to London. Not long before Mrs. Wilberforce had passed on into the larger life, and the interesting home in Dean's Yard, Westminster, was left desolate to him. After these séances the Archdeacon, speaking to me somewhat in detail of the messages he had thus received from his wife, added impressively, "If ever I heard my Charlotte's voice, I heard it there." Mrs. Wriedt's mediumship is of a very unusual order, and includes the independent voice.

As the guest of Mr. Stead, in London, Donna Roma Lister had some very striking messages from her aunt, the Baroness Rosencrans, who had passed out suddenly, leaving some important matters unsettled. The details of these were complicated, and the conversation (for it was a perfectly natural conversation between two persons rather than a series of messages) with its overwhelmingly indisputable testimony of the personal identity of the Baroness, was a

new revelation of the natural, simple, and direct conditions that may persist between those in the two states of being. This séance, at which I was also present, was held in Mr. Stead's country house in Wimbledon, through the mediumship of Robert King, a well-known psychic in London, a university man, and one whose culture and personality have always insured him a life of social consideration.

Beside these personal and evidential messages, are a large number, a very voluminous mass indeed, of statements and affirmations not of a nature to be verified, as they have to do with conditions beyond mortal ken, but which, in the light of the laws of evolutionary progress, seem natural and probable. Of this order are many (alleged) messages from Theodore Parker, received within the decade after his death (which took place in Florence in 1861) and which, though not verifiable, are by no means incredible. Mr. Parker and Frances Power Cobbe had long corresponded, but their only personal meeting was but a few days before Mr. Parker's death. Miss Cobbe was then staying in Florence, sharing a villa on Bellosguardo with Isa Blagden, Mrs. Browning's dearest and most

intimate friend. There were one or two messages, at least, from Mr. Parker (or purporting to be) in which reference was made to some of these circumstances; but they were never published, and the Boston friend (Mrs. Edwin Percy Whipple) in whose keeping they were, has also passed on into the Unseen. Unfortunately I did not copy them at the time they were shown to me. There are, however, some purporting to be from Mr. Parker that are published and which may be found by any inquirer in the department of spiritualistic literature in the Public Library of Boston. In those days the surviving friends held any messages of a personal character as being too essentially private to admit of public reference; and this feeling especially pervaded those circles so felicitously alluded to by Oliver Wendell Holmes as the Brahmin class of New England. In one of these messages from Mr. Parker, he says, "I know that if I unfold here the attributes and faculties of my diviner nature, I shall hereafter find all I need of God." The phrasing seems singularly characteristic of Theodore Parker. At another time (January 4, 1869) an apparent message from him was of a rather impressive nature in its suggestion :

Now thought is, in fact, your spirit, nothing more, nothing less; . . . it is here and instantly it is there. A spirit dwelling in the body obeys, to a certain extent, the physical laws pertaining to the body, and, to a very large extent, it is free from them. It goes whithersoever it will. It traverses the universe. It holds communion with the inhabitants of the most distant star, and as perfectly, as a spirit, as it can hold communion with its fellows here.

In another of these Mr. Parker speaks of the beauty of the day to him when his spirit was free "from a suffering body" (there had been a long and painful illness) and of his "interior satisfaction", and continued, "I am, I shall be, forever! I live. God is. My very soul seemed palpable to me." The message continued:

. . . I stood in a lovely valley something such as I had seen in Turner's pictures, but no picture could represent the view I had: villas; terraced gardens; the air like a dewy summer morning when the flowers give their fragrance. . . . I was exultant in life and vigor and there came the desire to move. What ecstasy of motion was this that made my will operative, but then I discovered that something beside my own will had led me hither, for some one called me. It was such a sense as I had

felt in childhood when my mother called me, bade me come that she might smooth my hair and win a kiss. The same sense of restful love was with me. . . . I moved forward and beheld — whom? Could it be that loving being I had known so long ago — my mother? She had no touch of age upon her. Her body was as lithe and beautiful as those of the maidens who danced over the grave of Adonaïs.

The vigilant and statistical psychical researcher will assure one that such messages as these contain “nothing evidential”; this is quite true, save, perhaps, in subtle ways. But any reader of Mr. Frothingham’s biography of Theodore Parker, with its sympathetic interpretation of his inner life, will recall Mr. Parker’s idolizing love for his mother, and will discern a curious likeness of spiritual quality, in his love for flowers and for nature, and in the classical allusion, and other recognizable things, to the quality of this paragraph.

Doctor Hyslop is not infrequently asked if he has messages from James, Myers, Hodgson, his friends and associates. While there have been instances of these, he very truly states that messages from men so well known have far less



evidential value than have some trivial incidents related by an individual of purely private life; as with so much literary record as is left by famous men, accessible to every one, their characteristics could be well imitated by any medium to whom these records were familiar. As a matter of actual fact, such works as the philosophy of James, and the poetry, essays, and criticism of Myers, are seldom familiar to any professional psychic; while, at the same time, exceptions may always occur. "It is the business of the scientific man to be exact; to require unmistakable evidence," Doctor Hyslop declares, and it is this great vigilance on his part in excluding any questionable evidence that has forced his recognition as the ablest and most reliable investigator of the psychic field the world has yet known.

There was an experience of my own for which it has seemed difficult to account on any other ground than that of the immediate manifestation of a friend who had passed with startling suddenness into the Unseen. Retiring at night in usual health, she died about two o'clock in the morning. Of her death I had not heard; but about midday I was conscious of a singular electrical wave

passing over me like chain lightning, an intense chill, and a feeling as if I had grasped an electric battery. With this came an unreasoning impulse to rush to the telegraph office and send a message to this friend. But there was certainly nothing to telegraph about, and the desire was put down as a mere vagary. But another intense impulse arose, with almost overmastering power—to write to her; and while, in the midst of a busy day I endeavored to banish the idea, I ended by yielding to it. Apparently the letter was as incoherent as it was brief, for, upon its return to me (from reaching lifeless hands already folded for the last time) I found on opening it that the note began with the question, “C—, *where* are you?” with the “where” twice underscored. As I knew perfectly well where she was, the question became curiously significant, as it must have been incited by a partial perception of her presence and some vague intimation that something unusual had occurred. It was not till the late afternoon of that day that I learned of her death. The theory seems to present itself that she came to me; that the question, “*Where* are you?” was prompted by this nebulous recognition of her approach, and that the electrical

isation that swept over me was due to the ether in the composition of the ethereal body. There seemed to have been just sufficient recognition of her presence to set every nerve tingling, and to produce an incoherent sense of consternation, with yet no clear normal perception of the truth.

All this speculative study lends deep interest to the terrestrial life.

. . . Take for a worthier stage the soul itself,  
Its shifting fancies and celestial lights.

The communications received by the Reverend William Stainton Moses, embodied in the book entitled "Spirit Teachings", to which allusion has already been made in the previous chapter, remain a distinctive and an important matter — not alone in the literature of spiritualism, but in that of all ethical thought and inquiry. While a few citations from these valuable communications have already been made, the following will also add illumination. As is, regarding conditions:

Magnetic rapport between man's spirit and his sides is fostered by prayer. You would pray more and you understand how rich a blessing prayer

brings. Through the agency of material operations the man is led up to the spiritual. . . . Doubt operates as a barrier to progress. . . . We do not advocate the depression of the vital powers by neglect any more than we countenance self-indulgence. The care of the body is a pre-requisite to the care of the soul. . . .

. . . We cannot teach you what you cannot receive. We can only dimly symbolize truths which one day your unclouded eye will see in their full splendor. . . . Even a lowering temperature, or electrical disturbance, or the neighborhood of unsympathetic and unfavorable human influences, may color a communication, or prevent it from being clear and complete. . . . The time is far nearer than you think when the old faith will be replaced by a higher and nobler one — one not antagonistic, but supplementary — and the pure gospel which Jesus preached shall find its counterpart again on an advanced plane of knowledge.

Mr. Moses became convinced of the absolute reality of communication from those in the Unseen, and his religious faith expanded to include that which he accepted as the larger view of truth.

These instances could be indefinitely extended, but too many narrations become only a tax on

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the reader. It is also true that many communications and impressions received, of a nature most striking to the recipient, do not, by reason of their involved relations to people or circumstances, lend themselves to recounting to others. If "spirit messages", as they are sometimes termed, were merely definite phenomena, with no intricate relatedness to life as a whole, they could be offered voluminously. But they are, for the most part, connected with long periods of experiences which would also need to be made plain in order to make clear their relative values. Life is a series of phases; we grow out from one into another, and it is not so much the objective world in which one is for the time being sojourning that is of importance, as is one's mental relation to that world. And this relation, being so subtle, so involved, is difficult or impossible to make clear to another. It is also the relation established between one's own personal activity and the spiritual realm, the close contact between the two, that facilitates spiritual communion. To build up a conscious life of the spirit, as superimposed or interpenetrated with the ordinary objective life, is to practically transfer one's self to a new plane. This is no miracle; it merely re-

quires one's own decision and one's acceptance of finer conditions. One does not need to become a convert to the Vedanta philosophy in its totality in order to derive from a partial use of its teachings very signal advantages. The practice that renders the physical body more plastic, more subtle, more sensitive to the higher vibrations, is one that requires only sufficient courage and power of will and intelligent recognition of what makes for one's real good, to induce one to adopt. To a considerable extent it is hygienic; and that it is beneficial to body, soul, and spirit, there can be no doubt. The physical body should be always held in mind as being an instrument, only, for the use of the spiritual man who inhabits it; as being a vehicle, so to speak; and thus to be kept in that repair which produces the best efficiency. Less food, more exercise in the open air, of which no form is more desirable than walking, better sleep, and the absolute exclusion of inharmonious mental states — this is the outline and indication of the training to be pursued. Exact details each one can best adjust for himself. He need not necessarily immerse himself in fantastic and spectacular performances, or refuse to still ornament society,

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or deport himself in any way which sets him violently apart from the common lot. There is a good deal to be said for the common lot, and for the rank and file of ordinary people, who, upon a more prolonged acquaintance, will often be found far less ordinary than was superficially imagined. Spirituality of life, if it comes to that, begins, if it does not end, in the practice of the common and fundamental virtues. It has its basis in financial honor; in keeping one's bills promptly paid, and living up to those standards of civilized life without which society could not long exist. The attempt to fix what one is pleased to call "spirituality" on one side, and industry and integrity on the other, is the most disastrous of failures. Spirituality does not consist in being a useless burden to the world, nor in refraining from any usefulness. If the alleged "spirituality" does not include a practical application of what its possessor fondly dreams is his superior outfit, it has little claim to consideration. Industry is quite as important in this world as is inspiration. Theoretical altitudes are of little moment unless they actualize themselves in sympathy, and helpfulness, and just consideration of the rights of others.

The culture of the will, in the sense of increasing receptivity to the Infinite will, cannot be too entirely pursued.

*"A chi vuole, non e cosa difficile"* is an Italian proverb. No assertion could be more true. Nothing, indeed, is difficult to him who wills. The will to believe can safely be employed with respect to all alleged communication — the will to select, to discriminate, but still, most important of all, *the will to believe*, when the evidence is reasonable and in accord with the spiritual laws that we know. Life is not well lived until it has somewhat of transformation. Man has a range of powers far beyond those that are usually recognized.

The tragic atmosphere that invests the world in this opening summer of 1917 is yet the atmosphere that is ushering in the new era. A great influx of power of a nature hitherto undreamed of awaits humanity. Curiously, in the last year of the nineteenth century, a statement was made to Richard Hodgson, from the "Imperator Group" through the mediumship of Mrs. Piper, to the effect that a world war was imminent and that it would be followed by an outpouring of spiritual power for which it would be a preparation. The entire message ran thus:



We act continually on earth in ways not discernible to the human mind. The whole earthly world is acted upon by some of our members, and at times the whole band is at work, developing the mind of man. Never since the days of Melchizedec has the earthly world been so susceptible to the influence of spirit. In the next century this will be astonishingly perceptible to the minds of men. I will also make a statement which you will surely see verified. Before the clear revelation of spirit communication there will be a terrible war in different parts of the world. This will precede much clear communication. The entire world must be purified and cleansed before mortal can see, through his spiritual vision, his friends on this side, and it will take just this line of action to bring about a state of perfection. Friend, kindly think on this.

An high official in public life received, during recent years, a series of communications, some of which were shared, confidentially, with the writer of these pages, and which were from personal friends, one or two being from his predecessor in office. In one of these the unseen communicator writes :

It is with much personal pleasure that I come to you with others to-day. Until you pass the great abyss yourself, you cannot know how strong is the

desire to bridge the gulf which separates the two conditions of life. For the desire of the spirit is intensified manyfold over that of the mortal condition. And when we can manage to accomplish it, then it is a matter of superior wisdom to make proper choice of what it is best to say. It is difficult for us either to satisfy our friends or ourselves and give what may be of the most value. It is really true that sometimes a matter of sentiment is worth more to some hearts than untold material wealth. Our thoughts are not so distinct in plane from yours, as you might at first suppose, at least my own are not at the present status. But changes may come. . . . For your own conviction I am permitted to tell you that in the coming April two important changes will occur which will alter many cherished plans, but which shall be of immeasurable advantage to you. The curtain falls, — I see no further. . . .

On the April thirteenth following, this predicted change took place. The entire series of messages, from which only this one extract may be presented here, are of a most remarkable character; and they are so convincing that if given in full, with all the personalities involved and the circumstances on the physical side of life, they could hardly fail of seeming, even to the most sceptical, a mass of unanswerable testimony.

The prophetic element in many communications has naturally invited the question as to whether the course of life is predestined? For if this were true, then it would seem that life were automatic, and the moral responsibility involved in man's free choice would be lost. This problem was submitted to Frederick Finch Strong, M.D. (Lecturer on Electricity at Tufts College), who suggested this rational explanation. It is universally recognized that every enterprise begins in thought. It exists in the mental realm before it is expressed in the actual outer realm. Granted this, Doctor Strong asked why impending changes could not be read on the same principle as that of new architectural creations? The architect first conceives of the building as a completion, in his mind; in mental picturing; then he reduces this picture to architectural draughting, and it is visible; later comes the slower and more clumsy process of materializing the structure in its outward form of wood, brick, or stone. "Now suppose," said Doctor Strong, "that some one could see, clairvoyantly, into the mind of the architect, before even the drawings are made, — could see the mental picture of the building in his thoughts — it would not be in the nature of

miracles to predict the building." Thus, psychological messages, even in the line of predictions, may be seen as not at all in the region of the abnormal, when we come to more fully grasp the underlying laws, but are, on their own plane, as normal as any intercourse with our fellow beings here. What is the "supernatural" but the natural on the superplane?

The question as to the continuity of conscious life is as indisputably a matter of demonstrated and of demonstrable proof as is the working of wireless telegraphy. Consciousness is a function of the spiritual organism. It is no more a function only associated with the physical brain than music is only associated with the mechanical keyboard. A piano furnishes music only under the touch of the musician. The physical brain manifests consciousness only under the impulse of the spiritual man. When the spiritual man withdraws from the physical mechanism, the brain ceases to transmit consciousness, as a piano ceases to transmit music when the player withdraws. But now, out of the air, comes to a surviving friend the stream of consciousness that has been identified with a particular individual. It has all his peculiar characteristics,

turns of expression, his memory, the records of his experiences which the friend has more or less largely shared, and even the mannerisms that formerly manifested themselves through his physical organism. Intercourse with this stream of consciousness becomes one of the most thrilling dramas. To what conclusion is one to come? Is there any conceivable hypothesis that fits all the facts save that it belongs to the individual it purports to be?

No sincere writer on matters connected with psychic phenomena could ever wish to be a special pleader. A writer holds his brief only for the truth. But man would have to be more dense than he is not to have innumerable proofs in his common, daily experiences that he is surrounded by intelligences that are not visible to his eye.

It is sometimes asked as to what distinction can be made between one's own subconscious mind and the person in the Unseen, as to the source of a mental suggestion? Is it subjective, or objective? Nor can this point be invariably determined, even by one's self. Mrs. Livermore related that at one time, in a train, a voice said peremptorily to her, "Go to the other

side!" Almost automatically she changed her seat to one on the other side of the car, and hardly an instant later an accident happened involving the seat on which she had been. Was it her own subconsciousness that warned her? Was it a friend in the Unseen? Who can decide?

To many who frankly accept, who have no choice but to accept, the truth (as one may seem entitled, considering all the evidence, to say) of spirit communication, there are various other phenomena which still remain a debatable ground. These include materialization and spirit photography. There is certainly a large body of evidence for both; but this evidence has not yet, one may assert, been subjected to the winnowing processes of sufficient scientific study to insure its acceptance. If spirit photography shall prove to be true, then the evidence of unseen forms around us would be as undeniable as is the existence of a star, caught by the sensitive plate, yet which no telescope has ever discovered. One of the notable instances of spirit photography and also of writing produced on photographic plates, is that of the late Archdeacon Colley, of England, in connection with Lady Warwick. The Countess was a parishioner and a warm

friend of the Archdeacon, and they made many experiments together in photography. These sensitized plates were as often filled with writing, of a very fine, minute character, as with pictures; and this writing varied according to the alleged personality of the writer. Archdeacon Colley was a member of the Wellesley family, and one of his alleged communicators was the Duke of Wellington, who was a distant relative. The writing purporting to come from the "Iron Duke" was of this minute character and could be read only as a transparency by holding the plate up to the light. The signature was "Arthur Wellesley." At one time one of these plates contained a message to the effect that the Archdeacon needed a friend to look after his interests in Africa. This was quite true. During a residence there, as Bishop of Natal, he had acquired some land which later rumor asserted to be rich in diamonds or other minerals. The Archdeacon had not the means to employ an agent to go out and investigate. At this juncture his alleged relative, the distinguished Duke, promised to send him assistance. As a matter of fact, not long afterward a stranger presented himself at the Archdeacon's home, saying that

he was about to leave for Africa to look after some of his own possessions there, and asking if in any way he could serve Archdeacon Colley while in the country. The Archdeacon gladly accepted the offer; but his subsequent death, not long after, has left the story without its last chapter. Lady Warwick and the Archdeacon would lay their hands on a package of photographic plates, unopened, and still wrapped as they came from the shop, and request that a given one, as the tenth from the top, or the third from the bottom, might be written upon, or impressed with a "spirit photograph", and this result would be found effected. Frequently Lady Warwick would bring the Archdeacon home with her to Warwick Castle after a Sunday evening service, when for some days they would apply themselves to these experiments. The eccentricities that attended the last months of Archdeacon Colley's life tended to somewhat invalidate his evidence; although so far as the plates themselves were their own evidence, that evidence existed. But the scientific investigator would demand, very properly, to be a witness to the processes of the mysterious inscriptions on them before he would hazard a verdict as to



whether they were produced by supernormal power. In the autumn of 1911, when I was staying with some friends in Leamington, the Archdeacon was a frequent guest of the family, and he would arrive in his carriage with a box containing so many of these plates to exhibit to us that it required the strength of two servants to bring them from the carriage into the house. So here they were, these plates with the extraordinary writing and pictures. One would have supposed that the learned London Society whose *raison d'être* for existence is the critical research into alleged psychic phenomena, would have sent a representative to study into this phase; but so far as I know this was never done. If the inscriptions on the plates were not supernormally produced, as both Lady Warwick and the Archdeacon sincerely believed, it would be "up" to the Society to discover their origin.

There are not wanting persons who have witnessed the materialization phenomena, in abundance, and who depart not much wiser than Lord Lovelace when he loved and rode away. The present writer freely confesses to being one of these; but, while viewing many, yet never to have seen them under what the scientific man

would call test conditions. In the light of the general non-scientific testimony these phenomena would seem somewhat negligible save for the very wonderful experiences of Sir William Crookes, whose authority as a scientist is as unquestioned as it is unquestionable. Within this past year Sir William has been asked by one of the editorial staff of "Light", the scholarly and able spiritualist journal of London, as to whether now, in his later life, he accounts for the "Katie King" materializations as he did when they occurred some forty years ago, and he replied that he regarded them as absolutely attested by the scientific tests he brought to bear upon them at the time. Even aside from Sir William, whose authority as one of the first of living scientists needs no support, there are other witnesses living who, when the materialized "Katie King" walked the floor, arm in arm with Sir William Crookes, visible, tangible, to every one present, saw the medium, Florence Cook, lying on a sofa in a trance in an adjoining room. To admit the genuineness of the "Katie King" phenomena is to admit the possibility of genuineness in later exhibitions of them. If this phase of manifestation should prove to be true

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beyond possibility of doubt, the phenomena would invite the study of new laws of nature, or laws beyond those grasped at present. That resource, however, presents no insuperable difficulties, as the entire evolutionary advance of the world is by a constantly advancing recognition of laws not before known. The time may not be distant when the affirmations of science and the revelations of psychology shall incite a restatement of faith — a new and more vital interpretation of the pure gospel as given by Jesus, and the progress of man be accelerated and stimulated anew by this Expansion of Religion.

## CHAPTER V

### POWERS OF THE ETHEREAL BODY

"We can imagine the existence of immaterial beings in this world without the fear of being refuted; though at the same time without being able to demonstrate their existence by reason. Such spiritual beings would exist in space, and the latter, notwithstanding, would remain penetrable for physical beings, because their presence would imply an acting power in space but not a filling of it, that is, not a resistance causing solidity."

IMMANUEL KANT.

"WITH what body do they come?" is a question to which science and knowledge gained from spiritualistic manifestations offer a fairly rational and not wholly incomplete answer. It is hardly a presumption, in the multiplicity of evidence, to form a definite conception of the ethereal body and its powers. In form it is not so much that it is a likeness of the physical body as the reverse. The physical body is a likeness of the ethereal body. It

follows the outline of the ethereal form as the glove follows the outline of the hand. Our besetting fallacy is to think of our present body as being the real one, whereas there is nothing positive or permanent about it. It is in a state of perpetual change. Speaking of materialization, what, after all, is the present physical body but a materialization? Only it coheres for an indefinite number of years and serves a more or less useful purpose as our instrument of communication with the world of the senses. But the ethereal is the "substantial" body to which Saint Paul alludes. There are occultists and theosophists who conceive of the ethereal being as not embodied at all in the physical form; that it uses the physical form as a central dynamic power uses its extensions of mechanism to distribute its force. The appearance of the etheric double, often at a distance from the person — an occurrence that, while comparatively rare, cannot be denied in the light of a preponderance of testimony — the appearance of this etheric double gives some support to the speculative theory that it has never been imprisoned in the physical; but any one who will make a special study of this matter, from the literature

of the Vedanta philosophy, of theosophy, and of occultism, will emerge with the concurrence of evidence in favor of the normal existence of the ethereal, clothed upon with the physical, and emerging, by the process we call death, into the ethereal world. This body is not one with which we have no present concern; *au contraire*, it is the body of immediate interest. As the ethereal universe is the source and the supply for the resources of the physical universe, so is the ethereal body that which determines the health, harmony, and general power of efficiency of the physical body. As a matter of actual fact, the emphasis of living should be placed on it. Food should be adapted to the ethereal, not to the material organism. The basis of all the various cults of diet — the vegetarian; the fruit, cereal, and milk; the non-meat-eating, while other general foods are retained — each and all these various modes are founded on a conscious knowledge, or an instinctive perception of the reality of the ethereal organism. At the same time, these cannot advantageously be applied in an arbitrary manner. Food must correspond to the development. To those who have reached a highly sensitive state the ordinary heavier foods are little

less than poisonous in their effect. They throw the entire organism out of balance. They are like pouring unrefined oil into a delicate machine. While, on the other hand, to the industrial laborer whose life is, as yet, mainly that of the physical plane, the attempt to exist by the more subtle and refined foods would result in lack of strength for his labor. But almost any one who has embarked on the finer plane of living will find that his system will regulate itself. When he has so developed the preponderance of the ethereal life, all desire for the grosser foods will leave him.

Again it is true that man is modifying and influencing his ethereal body, day by day, by his mental states. When he withdraws from the present plane, his form and aspect will be the result of his intellectual and spiritual life on earth. The powers of this subtle body correspond to those we know on the outer plane. The eye can see, only with infinitely greater and clearer sight than that of the limited and restricted physical sight. The ear hears, and catches vibrations far beyond those of the mortal plane. Of what is it composed, this ethereal body? It is believed to be largely of the lumi-

niferous ether. At one time the question was asked by a sitter with Mrs. Piper as to how the person on this side looks to the ethereal eye? "When you look at me, what do you see?" was inquired; and the reply was: "I see your ethereal body and your physical body as a dark shadow surrounding it." As a matter of experiment the question was asked of the same friend through several séances; and the reply would always be singularly applicable. The "dark shadow" of the physical body varied with physical and mental states wholly recognized by the questioner herself. Sometimes she felt light and free and joyous — almost as if composed of luminiferous ether, then and there; and at such times, to the spirit-friend, there was little shadow of the denser body. Again, from some infringement of the ideal laws of living — physical, mental, or spiritual — her physical body would be so dense that the spirit-eye could hardly discern the ethereal self. Then the question occurs to one as to how the sight of the ethereal being registers material objects, the landscape, houses, furniture, pictures? Can it read the printed word? Can it read writing? Can it see the general movements on the earth plane?



To all of these speculative questions there have been intelligent replies. The degree of sight and hearing and perception on that side seem to vary individually as they do here. No arbitrary laws can be laid down. It is possible that this sight is conditioned by something not unlike radioactivity. There are well-authenticated cases of warnings of physical danger that would indicate that the spirit eye saw the physical object or conditions. To multiply incidents would be easy, but any one may verify for himself both from numerous records in almost countless volumes, and from much current experience. These instances are chiefly valuable, or at least they find their most permanent value and importance in the evidence they offer of higher laws than those that have commonly been grasped. "It is henceforth open to science," says Sir William Crookes, "to transcend all we now think we know of matter and to gain new glimpses of a profounder scheme of cosmic law." All organic evolution is tending in the most unmistakable way toward the production of a higher psychical life and toward the clear and definite recognition of that life.

As early <sub>as</sub> the middle of the seventeenth

century, Robert Boyle, one of the most distinguished scientists of his day, made a discovery of the nature of the atmosphere which has since been confirmed by modern scientists, that it consists, "not only of numberless exhalations of the terraqueous globe, but of substantial emanations, also, from the celestial bodies." Recent investigations indicate that electrons, which are sent out with an inconceivable swiftness during radioactive changes, are, in reality, constituents of our atmosphere, and that their origin is to be traced to the sun. These electrons are contributory to the electrification of the atmosphere, as Sir William Ramsay points out. The discovery of argon in 1894 threw much light upon the nature of the atmosphere whose properties are so closely connected with the ether of space. All these scientific data relate themselves to the conditions of the ethereal body. Nor are they limited to its conditions after it is free from the physical, but they apply in a considerable degree to its present existence. At a meeting of the Society of Arts in the spring of 1901, Professor Ayrton said, in some discussion of the Marconi system, that we "are gradually coming within thinkable distance of the realization of a

prophecy that he had himself made four years previously — that if one desired to call to a friend whose whereabouts he did not know, he had only to call with the electromagnetic voice which would be audible to the electromagnetic ear. "Where are you?" he would ask. A faint, but unmistakable reply would come: "I am at the bottom of a coal mine, or crossing the Andes, or on a steamer in the middle of the Atlantic."

The most potent form of energy is thought; given the conditions of *rapport* between two minds, and the result may be communication between the two as definitely, and by a law as unerring, as that of communication between two wireless plants that are attuned to each other and which register the same vibrations. Ultimately, thought will be the universal method of communication. Telepathy will supersede the telegraph, the telephone, and wireless telegraphy. It will serve every demand, public and private. Distance will interpose no obstacles, for thought overcomes all time and space. If telepathy is "the science of the soul's interchange with God", of "the interchange of the thought of one soul with another"; if it is the revelation of "that reality of consciousness where all God's thought

is interpreted to the soul"; if its vibration "never dies out of the atmosphere of thought"; then must the discovery of this great law take precedence of that of any other achievement of the twentieth century. Man will learn how to carry on conversational interchange and intercourse in thought over any conceivable distance, as satisfactorily as now in personal presence and by oral speech. Man will learn how to call up his friend in space as unmistakably as now to call him by telephone. Time and space are the limits that condition the physical life. They define the terrestrial from the celestial. But man is, fundamentally, a celestial being. He is only partially and temporarily a terrestrial being. He is a spirit and thus belongs to the spiritual universe.

A great variety of experiments in hypnotic investigations, as well as the testimony of clairvoyance, have gone to establish the reality of the ethereal body. It has been described as a replica of the physical body; the "etheric double"; it has the entire form of the physical body, as the hand has the form of the glove that covers it; only, as it is the hand which is the important and more permanent, and not the glove, so likewise

it is the ethereal, and not its temporary physical case, which is the real unit of departure. Theosophy teaches that there are relays of bodies, each growing finer and more subtle, as life refines and becomes more exalted. As a matter of fact then, this ethereal body is the one with which, here and now, we must reckon. Physicians know far more than they can impart of the directive power of the ethereal structure as a factor in recovery from illness. Much of a physician's practice is in stimulating the ethereal forces to take command and vitalize the physical. This subtle body can be educated and trained to so take command that illness will be practically eliminated from experience.

As soon as one learns to detach himself from his physical body, rather than to identify himself with it; as soon as he detaches his real life and his transcendent and infinite possibilities from the mere visible and tangible world in which he is sojourning, the whole question of progress, of experience, of all that makes up living, is transfigured and transposed to another plane. Where were before annoyances, irritations, anxieties, there are now serenities and joyous acceptances. The scenery along the way does not dominate

the man as a finality. A man with health and definite endeavor is not cast down because he emerges from his comfortable home on a wintry morning into streets more or less impassable with drifting snows and biting winds. He can quite recognize that it is all very uncomfortable without in the least being depressed or cast down by a passing discomfort. So one learns to take the various incidental infelicities of life in the same way when he realizes himself as an immortal being quite detached and apart from the immediate environment. One can thus center his life in the ethereal rather than in the physical body. His strength is ethereal strength, not physical; and he learns to dominate the mere physical realm. Acquiring this power, it no longer has dominion over him. As a matter of fact, when one reaches the right stage, he adapts his food to the ethereal rather than to the material body. This cannot be done in an arbitrary way, but only when one has advanced to the proper plane. Then the desire or feeling of any need for the coarser foods dies of itself.

The New Testament is full of the urgency of the present moment. "*Now* is the day of salvation." "The kingdom of heaven is at hand."

"The kingdom of heaven is within you." The traditional acceptance, in a general way, that the spiritual world was only entered by the gateway of death; that between the physical and the spiritual was a definite line of demarcation, is a great disadvantage. One's only limit to any degree of advancement, now and here, is the limit in himself.

Incorporating this truth into one's consciousness, the fine art of living is placed on a new foundation. It radiates from another center. One learns to close the door on an unpleasant train of thought. He grasps the exceedingly practical advice of the apostle that if there be things true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report, *think* on these things! No one who has the faintest regard for his spiritual life will do it such violence as to entertain hostile, bitter, unkind, or unworthy thoughts. No well-balanced man would introduce poison into his system, or cut or burn his hand intentionally. Far less would he distort and destroy his spiritual nature by unworthy thoughts. Besides this, thought is so creative that one determines himself and very greatly his habitual environment by the quality of his thought.

The detachment possible to the ethereal body while yet clothed upon by the physical is revealed by the action of anæsthetics. Louis James Block, the poet and the author of some especially fine musical criticism, related to a friend an experience he had in a hospital in Chicago. Under these he "went out", so to speak, and found himself in a beautiful woodland, with walks and fountains, and sculptured art, where many people seemed to be (as in a park), and a very close friend, who had some time before passed over into the "life more abundant", came to meet and greet him, and they walked together up a long avenue. Now this experience was no mere vagary; it was, indeed, far more real than any experience in the physical world, because the ethereal realm itself is far more real and more significant than this; just as the world of manhood and womanhood is far more real and more significant than the world of childhood. As man advances and develops, his successive environments, of course, become more real. What had happened to Doctor Block? Simply that the anæsthetic enabled the spiritual being, his essential self, clothed in its ethereal body, to partially withdraw from the physical tenement and enjoy



a sojourn in the ethereal world in which his friend was then dwelling. A severe illness often has the same liberating effect.

Charles Bonnet, the Swiss naturalist (whose life fell between 1720-1793), declared even then that science would ultimately be able to detect this immaterial body, formed of ether and light, and to discern its organs and the processes by which it is interpenetrated with the denser body.

It is the power of the ethereal body that in great stress and crises takes the direction and accomplishes the incredible; as when a cripple, unable to stand, suddenly walks out of a house that is on fire. Human endurance would gain immeasurably by transferring the consciousness to summoning up these latent ethereal powers. William James touched upon this in noting that when a man has reached the point of apparent physical exhaustion, another set of energies often suddenly spring up. The ethereal body is too often so clogged by food that it is paralyzed. The athletic strength liberated by the professional training is simply the liberation of the ethereal powers. It is the ethereal self that wins the race and that holds the championship of the stroke. Athletics are closely allied with these powers.

Sleep partially liberates the ethereal body, the degree of detachment depending on the spiritual development of the individual. The custom of prayer on retiring has its basis in the law that governs the ethereal man, and which permits him access to higher and ever diviner regions while his body is in the trance of sleep, if his spirit be fitted for these. Sleep should be prepared for as for a sacrament. Sleep and death are precisely the same, save that in the latter the magnetic connection between the two bodies is broken; while in sleep it is not broken, and the man clothed in his ethereal form returns to the denser body. Companionships are enjoyed in sleep, both with those who have passed from this world and with those who are still here, if there is that spiritual sympathy which draws the spiritual selves together. Sleep is the method by which man is recharged with ethereal energy. The object of sleep is not the rest of the physical body, as has commonly been held; it is for the refreshment and the reinvigoration of the spiritual self. The spiritual man could not live if he were not allowed to pass something like a third of his time in his native air. He would be stifled if confined in the physical mechanism with no intervals of

release. Life is of this twofold nature. It extends from the visible into the invisible. The life principle is chiefly in the ethereal organism, and so, when the physical is at rest, the spiritual man, clothed in his ethereal body, is most active. He travels, he visits new places on earth as well as explores the ethereal realms. He enjoys a freedom that knows far less of limitation and obstacle than during his waking hours. Having been recharged with energy, the spiritual man again enters the physical tenement, seizes his instrument, so to speak, to resume the discharge of his duties. He passes out from the body on a mere filament, and a spiritual covering is woven over the denser body to protect it while the molecules of the ethereal are being replenished with vigor.

The debatable experience of dreams is twofold in its nature and cause. There are dreams which are merely of the lower, physical realm; distortions, fantasies, incoherent and unimportant. But that which may be called the impressional dream, that which leaves the memory of a vivid experience, of something far more real than any occurrence in ordinary waking hours, is precisely that which it seems — a real experience. Lowell

records, in a letter to a friend, a dream experience of being with his wife (Maria White Lowell) after she had passed from earth, and he saw her sitting "with our boy in her arms." The poet added that he could not believe it a dream, so real was the meeting. In which he was undoubtedly right. Temporarily released from his body, what more natural than that in the ethereal he should rejoin his wife and their little son. The soul, like the body, requires sustenance. How impressively does Stephen Phillips, in his poem of "The Dead Soul", emphasize this truth!

She felt it die a little every day;  
Flutter more wildly, and more feebly pray, —  
this soul that was denied its spiritual food.

"Imploring dimly something beautiful", is the nature of the soul; imploring art, beauty, thought, and the divine realities. For it is of far more importance to a man that he shall be kind and generous and just to others than that they shall be kind and generous and just to him. His riches are not in his tangible and visible possessions, but in the qualities of spirit that he develops. His release to the ethereal for a certain proportion of every twenty-four hours is one of

his essential opportunities for developing the qualities of the spirit. In the ceaseless activities of the lower life, the soul would soon be paralyzed. It can only live by renewing its energies from the divine. It is this "strenuousness" of life when unrelieved by love and by prayer — unrelieved by the spiritual renewal of sacrifice and service — the strenuousness centered on self, intent on greed and gain for personal advantage, that at its worst leads to discords and crimes, to despair and suicide. The cure for all these ills is to be sought in the higher life of conduct and beauty. "Thou shalt show me the way of life." Within the infinite possibilities of the human life we must constantly be building up the spiritual life. The human environment must be merged in the spiritual environment. The quality of living that, viewed from the lower level, appears to be supernormal,—on its own level, and one to which man can ascend, is seen to be a purely normal life. For the normal is always to be sought on the higher plane, as that health is more normal than illness; truth and honesty and justice are more normal than are falsehood and treachery. Achieving life on this plane man learns to live beneficently. He is

then able to attract the tide of brilliant prosperity, and he learns to transmute wish into will. Instead of denying and doubting and living in impoverished and unfortunate conditions, he shall enter on the new order of creative energy. It is all this initiation of an entirely loftier and happier and more forceful trend of living on whose threshold man to-day stands, and it is all-important that he shall grasp its import. He comes to control the forces that formerly controlled him. The power of the subliminal self is one that also invites much scientific and psychological study. Every one is conscious of this self, subliminal, subconscious, whatever he may call it, but which, at all events, is his real self.

This spiritual self, or the subliminal, as so often termed, has a marvellous capacity for registering events only equalled by that of the Recording Angel. *You* may not know a given thing; *it* does. It will remind you of that thing; it will picture it; it will confront you with its pages at every turn. You will be suddenly impelled, it may be, on a given day to send a token to a friend, with no particular reason that you know of for sending it on that day more than on

any other. Yet the recipient will write and tell you that this date was an anniversary, or some special date in life, and wonder how you knew of it? Consciously, you did not know it; yet it often turns out that one has in his possession some utterly forgotten data, letter, inscription, or has sometime and somewhere been told this very thing that suddenly starts up and commands the outer organism. Is not this vigilant subliminal self the real, the spiritual being, the larger consciousness?

Canon Scott Holland has spoken of "the mysterious ether in which we float, and to which no physical limitations apply. Sounds, motions, transmit themselves through this medium," he continues, "under conditions which transform our whole idea of what space or time mean. Through and beyond the semiphysical mystery, a world of spiritual activity opens upon us. It has capacities of which we never dreamed. It allows of apparent contact of spirit with spirit, in spite of material distance and physical obstruction. There are modes of communication which are utterly unintelligible to our ordinary scientific assumptions, yet which actual experience tends more and more to verify."

If sleep were regarded as a sacrament of the spirit, its result would be the imparting of untold richness to the waking hours. To this end the preparation of body, soul, and spirit is all essential. Sleeping rooms should not only have good ventilation and comfort, but they should have beauty. For harmony of vibration is much conditioned by artistic surroundings. One should enter that realm to which he is liberated by the condition called sleep with entire sweetness and exaltation of spirit. Love all things, not because of the acceptance of any truism, but because all things are worthy of love. Banish fear, doubt, irritating thoughts or memories. Leave all problems in the divine keeping. In the morning one will return with all things harmoniously adjusted. He will waken to newness of life. He will be infinitely and joyously conscious of the indwelling spirit. He will be intensely conscious of a working, creative, self-acting force seeking to express itself in the outer life. "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you." When one has gained a clear and well-defined consciousness and realization of his relations to the unseen, he has gone far toward surprising the secret of all hope and happiness. The ranks of the Great



White Brotherhood are not to be regarded as a myth or a fable. There are masters of wisdom who guide humanity. He who enters the realm of sleep as a sacramental condition shall be companioned by these brothers. They will replenish him with intellectual force; they will lead him to the fount of living waters. They will "lead life to sovereign power"!

Among the extraordinary seers of the modern world was Andrew Jackson Davis. His numerous books are constantly being issued in new editions and more widely read than when they were written. While it is true that they would be much improved by the blue pencil, yet, with some dross, the pure gold is found. To the critic who insisted on separating the chaff from the wheat, Apollo gave the chaff for his reward. In an academic sense, Mr. Davis was an uneducated youth; but his access to infinite stores of knowledge in the ethereal realms is evident. It would not conduce to the intellectual elevation of the world to recommend his method to the general undergraduate, but in the case of Mr. Davis, it seemed adequately to serve a purpose. In place of study, he would go into a trancelike sleep for two or three hours in the daytime, and on emerg-

ing he would dictate to an amanuensis, and later to his wife, the things he had seen and heard while in "the superior condition", as he termed it. His works are the more remarkable in that many of the modern inventions, as motor cars, electrical appliances, and other things, are clearly prophesied in these books. Like Swedenborg, Mr. Davis appeared to make excursions into space, and the descriptions given by the great Swedish scholar and seer and by Mr. Davis do not greatly differ in their essential matter. Mr. Davis at one time claimed to see (clairvoyantly) the process of death; to see the spiritual body disengaging itself from the physical, and this was one of the first testimonies that took hold of the attention and impressed the imagination of people. If it did not actually change public opinion, it at least made a strong impression upon a great number. In his book entitled "Nature's Divine Revelation", Mr. Davis offered a philosophy of the universe that stands the test of modern examination. With no knowledge of the Vedanta philosophy, he yet practiced its teachings, led, apparently, by the inner light. He developed a power to pass at will into the "superior condition", making his physical body

plastic by taking much open-air exercise, abstaining from meat, and keeping an even mind. This last achievement he held to be so important that he called it "the magic staff", and in his advanced age he issued a card to send to all his friends and correspondents bearing his own picture and the legend: "Behold! Here is thy magic staff: Under all circumstances keep an even mind." It was Andrew Jackson Davis who revealed the powers of the ethereal body, in his books under the general title of "The Great Harmonia", published in the middle years of the nineteenth century, and brought them into clearer and more rational view. He discerned the electrochemical nature of the physical organism. He recognized the power of the mind to project itself through space. He saw and placed before his readers a truth that he discovered, and that has never been disproved, that all things visible are the expressions of an interior productive cause, — the spiritual essence; that even the sun in the heavens is the expression of the spiritual sun which we have never seen; that it is the centre of all material things.

With the present knowledge of the ether, and of radioactive forces, this phraseology might be

changed, but Mr. Davis's definitions practically agree with the latest revelations of scientific truth. At all events the work of this strange being has contributed essentially to what we know of the powers of the ethereal body.

Nor can derision or indifference longer invest the theme. In the space in which we live unseen people come and go. Geographically neither interferes with the other. To realize how completely organized life on widely differing planes can occupy practically the same space, one has only to think of a man and of a fly, buzzing about, in the same room. In contrast of consciousness, what an unfathomed gulf lies between the two manifestations of vitality. That

There are more guests at table than the hosts

Invited; the illuminated hall

Is thronged with quiet, inoffensive ghosts,

As silent as the pictures on the wall, —

is the poet's insight into literal truth.

The spirit-world around this world of sense

Floats like an atmosphere, and everywhere

Wafts through these earthly mists and vapors dense

A vital breath of more ethereal air.

The powers of the ethereal body are so mar-

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vellously in advance of the physical instrument that it is no wonder the liberation from the denser body is invested with a thrill of joy and a profound realization that death is, indeed, "the most beautiful adventure in life."

## CHAPTER VI

### THE NATURE OF THE ETHEREAL WORLD

“And our visions, the visions of poets, the most solid  
announcements of any.”

WALT WHITMAN.

“Sometimes a breath floats by me,  
An odor from Dreamland sent  
That makes the ghost seem nigh me  
Of a splendor that came and went;  
Of a life lived somewhere, I know not  
In what diviner sphere.”

LOWELL.

**B**ETWEEN the celestial and the physical  
realms lies the ethereal world; not  
synonymous with the spiritual, yet par-  
taking more of the guiding and directing energy  
of the celestial spheres

“Toward which the whole creation moves”,  
than does the physical, and still more clearly per-  
ceived as one of the evolutionary phases leading  
onward and upward to the divine. The Chris-  
tian conception has largely been that the earth

is a finality in experimental development, and a fixed condition of blessedness or misery succeeds the experience here. The expansion of this conception into many phases of evolutionary progress, succeeding each other, yet with no definite line of demarcation between — as childhood succeeds infancy, as youth succeeds childhood, as maturity succeeds youth — is not less in accord with the divine teaching, but rather a truer interpretation of it. The ethereal world is a condition rather than a locality, and one that is more or less entered even while the ethereal body of man is still clothed upon by the physical; but when released from this tenement, the ethereal realm is the environment for an indefinite period.

To live in the ethereal world here and now is to be responsive to its atmosphere of greater freedom, of joyous exhilaration, of detachment from the things of the senses. Still it is true that he who proposes to discuss this realm may incite and invite the legitimate expectation of some description or interpretation that would enable the reader to formulate a coherent and reasonable idea of its conditions and of the modes of life that prevail or are possible. From the

very nature of the universe such an expectation cannot be met. It is true that all sorts of absurdities are more or less materialized in the press to catch the eye, the fancy, or the price of the book or the paper; extravaganzas which could only, at the most, capture the time or the attention of the unthinking. It is true that one may encounter the individual who will calmly put forth the startling assurance that his work is "on the astral plane", an assertion the more readily accepted in that he has certainly no capacity for usefulness on any plane known to the normal human life. The woman who announces herself as the reincarnation of Sappho, and bestows upon all passers-by printed leaflets that declare her to be "Internationally famous as Author, Poet, and Prophetess"; who confidently assures all who have eyes to read or ears to hear that in the "All-Luminous Temple of The Soul" (admission fee) you will listen (through her "unfolded" powers) to the voice of God; the man who has an unfailing recipe for transformation — all these more or less abound and need not be especially reckoned with. The existence of the counterfeit does not disprove the genuine. One may contemplate with mild amusement, if not with



interest, the myriad cults of the present day which assert themselves as some form of spiritual philosophy. The cynic might surmise that spiritual aspiration had sown the dragon's teeth and that the harvest unrolled itself before his vision. The pretender, ignorant, self-assertive, may sometimes attract the throng (and the shekels); while the prophet, wise and modest, is passed by unnoticed.

Thou shalt see the boastful gain  
What meek Worth shall seek in vain.  
Thriftless running to and fro  
Shall for zeal and service show.  
Foolish ones shall sit in state  
While the wise, unplaced, shall wait.

Edith Thomas, most spiritually penetrating of poets, has thus well pictured this aspect; but her insight would be less delicate and profound than it is if she did not also image the other side, if she did not so alluringly suggest the nobler path, as in the continuance:

These are so, as thou shalt see;  
Not too much perturbed be, —  
Nay, for this were harm's increase, —  
In thy bosom nestle Peace!

These are so from blinded sight ;  
If thine eye have more of light,  
Thankful, keep within the ray  
Thrown upon thy fairer way,  
Thankful that no God commands  
Thou go forth with scourging hands.

Emerson counsels, "Let us treat the people as if they were real. Perhaps they are!" And, truly, as a matter of fact, there is a far greater proportion of sincerity and genuine helpfulness among the latter-day myriad of persons who have, or who believe they have, a message to deliver, than there is of conscious and intentional charlatanism. Phillips Brooks once said that "it does not require a great man to do great things, but a consecrated man." Wherever a man or woman earnestly desires to benefit others, the benefit comes, no matter how little claim the one who communicates this benefit might seem, to the more cultured and developed mind, to possess. For the past quarter of a century, or more, there has been an increasing wave of ethical activity.

No more important feature of this vitality of spiritual life has manifested itself than the movement known as Christian Science. It has extended itself all over the civilized world ; it has

erected beautiful churches; it has filled them with great and intelligent congregations, whose eager loyalty to their faith is magnetic; and it has manifested itself in what, without exaggeration, may be termed incalculable benefit to mankind. For this reason. That Christian Science has stood with such vigor and such extended general interest for the idealistic philosophy. There can be no hesitancy in recognizing that it has accomplished marvels. One need not necessarily be numbered as an adherent of this form of faith in order to recognize the beneficent working of this order, any more than he need be a Chinese in order to recognize valuable statesmanship in China. The miracle work of many of the saints of the mediæval ages has hardly left a more extraordinary record than that of Mary Baker Eddy. It is a work so nearly contemporary that sufficient perspective is not yet gained to discern its true values. There have been extravagant praise and equally extravagant dispraise of Mrs. Eddy. There are few human beings who have not their defects, but it is not by defects and faults and errors and mistakes that a man should be judged. He should be estimated, not by what he is at this moment, but by that which he aspires

to be and is on the way to become. That the aspirations of Mrs. Eddy were of a high order the results of her life bear witness. As a woman, she had a singularly winning and refined personality, and she was so constituted as to be a distributing center of radiant energy. This communicated itself to any one, receptive to the influence, who approached her. In her early life she was the patient of a singular being who was one of the predestined helpers on earth, for a great work necessitates a successive series of workers. If her own mind was kindled by this contact, she certainly carried the idea out and developed it in ways undreamed-of at that time and to a magnitude that would probably have seemed incredible to herself at first. Because Franklin first caught the spark on his kite that he recognized as electric does not indicate that Edison, Tesla, Marconi, and various other great men who have developed the power of electricity in any way deprived Franklin of his own claims. All advancement in science, in ethics, in every department of human knowledge, consists in building a superstructure on the foundations of the past. Humanity is always the heir of all the ages. The ethics of Christian Science include the sharing with all other forms of religion

the recognition of the divine omniscience; but it has especially emphasized that just in proportion as one realizes this, he finds good coming into his life. Before this good, evil flees away. It is seen that no evil thing has any real power to harm; no one need fear or dread; and if all forms of ethical teaching do not as clearly impress these truths as does Christian Science, then the worse for the other forms, for they are of the very inner essence of the teachings of Jesus. As the thought of man develops to include more and more of the real nature of the divine, so does this thought change to tolerance, sympathy, and love, rather than to dwell on defects with harsh criticism. As for the healing power inculcated in Christian Science, it has been one of the signal blessings of the world. Is it extravagant to say that the slavish fear of disease is even worse than the disease itself? The moment one banishes fear and dread out of his life, he disentangles himself from an abject slavery. Nor need it be objected that such truth is by no means the exclusive possession of Christian Science, but belongs to all forms of religious faith. That is true enough; but if a restatement has made this truth more evident, and induced a more literal application of it to the

general business of living, so much the better. In this life where we so need all aid, all consolation, all encouragement, let us take them wherever we find them. There are many banners that proclaim truth. And it is the truth that shall make men free.

It is the fact that mankind, even now and here, is entering into closer relation with the nature of the ethereal world and the ethereal forces, that has tended to foster so many new ethical cults. It would be a judgment as ignorant as it would be uncharitable not to recognize that, all in all, they are productive of good. The buoyant exhilaration of New Thought; the lovely spirit of the Unity cult, especially when interpreted by that beautiful and consecrated spirit, Mrs. Sophia Van Marter, in her "Fellowship" in New York; these and others that might be named are in no wise in opposition to the regular work of the established churches, but they supplement and extend it. Mrs. Livermore used to say that the best and most useful leader was one only a little in advance of those who were being led. This may account for the fact that many people are aided by speakers who are neither very wise nor cultured, but who have perceived some truth and

are sincere in their desire to pass it on to others. They are listened to with genuine advantage by audiences who might not be reached by a more learned speaker. When the learned speaker, however, is inspired and illuminated by love, he can then reach the lowliest as well as the highest. The present Archbishop of Canterbury is one who can wonderfully adapt his message to the sympathetic acceptance of even the crudest listener; and this power, revealed to us in its perfection by Jesus, the Christ, is one that has characterized every great religious teacher. A few years ago Westminster Abbey was undergoing some repairs; a group of workmen ate their lunch sitting down in the cloisters; and Archdeacon Wilberforce, from his residence in Dean's Yard, came out each day to give them ten minutes' talk. "He's a mon, he is," was the cheerful verdict of praise from his humble hearers, who carried away with them a clear idea that to be honest and temperate and kind was far more desirable than the reverse. The spiritual beauty of the brotherhood of man, and of love and tolerance to all forms of religious belief, far antedates the Bahai revelation; but there are those who catch the idea for the first time from speakers

of this movement, and whose enthusiasm for what is to them a new idea becomes a working energy in their lives.

All these movements, cults, individual expressions, are contributing to the recognition of the nature of the ethereal world. They are contributing to the growth of spiritual life. Theosophy endeavors to divide the unseen realms into various strata, various conditions, defining stages of transition. The realm of the ether is evidently the realm of an increasingly intense life, an ever increasing reality. There are in nature such undreamed-of forces, such stupendous possibilities of evolutionary development, that no man can form any conception of what lies before humanity in its onward and endless progress. Science contemplates the electromagnetic energy that holds the universe in harmonious relation; that is a force stronger than gravitation and neutralizes that law; and one of the speculative theories of aviation is that the magnetic and electric forces may be so combined that they will unite centripetal and centrifugal forces, thus overcoming the law of gravitation and enabling the entire traffic of the world to be carried on in the air with the same ease with which it is



now handled on the surface of the earth. Sir William Crookes states that it is open to science to transcend all that man has known and to enter on a new view of a profounder scheme of the cosmic law. Organic evolution is the basis on which will arise the most perfect order of spiritual life.

It is already known that man is so constructed as to be able to respond to successive systems of laws that exist in unbroken continuity. The ethereal world is the very foundation of organic existence here. Less obvious than the physical environment, it is infinitely more important, as without it the physical universe itself would cease to exist.

We recognize but a small proportion of the etheric vibrations. The perception of the Röntgen ray is one of these recognitions; of the violet ray is another, for both belong to the etheric world beyond the octaves that the senses recognize; heat, light, electricity — all the great forces — are of the etheric realm. "Within, beyond, the world of ether," says Frederic W. H. Myers, "as a still profounder, still more generalized aspect of the Cosmos, must lie, I believe, the world of spiritual life. That the world of

spiritual life does not depend upon the existence of the material world I hold as now proved by actual evidence. That it is in some way continuous with the world of ether I can well suppose."

This theory would differentiate the spiritual from the ethereal world as entirely as the ethereal is differentiated from the physical realm. This series of progressive states is so obvious in its analogy to all we know of the universe as to be intuitively recognized as a true interpretation of evolutionary progress. Mr. Myers speaks of a condition "where life and thought are carried on apart from matter." That is, from matter as we know it; but not apart from a finer and more ethereal order of matter, for the soul is always embodied, and the series of finer and still finer bodies will always be in correspondence with a finer and still more subtle environment. Mr. Myers affirms his own conviction that "beyond the ether there must be, not one stage only, but countless stages in the infinity of things."

The nature of the ethereal world can hardly be studied apart from the intellectual and the spiritual phenomena of this world. There is no definite line of demarcation, not even that of

death. For death is but the adventure beautiful of the spirit, and he who makes heaven finds heaven. Man lives so largely in and by ethereal forces while on earth (deprived of those he could not continue to live here at all) that it seems evident he is not ushered into an environment altogether unfamiliar when he definitely withdraws from the physical world. The extension of consciousness is no more phenomenal in any swift and sudden change, than it is in its gradual extension in this life. In every man there are latent forces which, if recognized and developed, would lift him to higher planes and induce in him such an accession of activities and energy as to transform his entire nature and his powers of achievement. This result would be effected on an entirely normal plane. The development of spiritual faculties is just as normal as is the development of the intellectual faculties. Objective life can be spiritualized. The soul can achieve a deeper realization of the dignity, the worth, and the infinite possibilities of its nature. It can compass spiritual efficiency. We talk of the limitations of fate and conditions and various forms of hindrance. As a matter of truth, these are merely negative; and they are subject to the

force of will. If the human will could be absolutely united and identified with the divine will, as a drop of water becomes identified with the ocean, all purposes could be easily accomplished. The force would be irresistible. The entire panorama of living would be transformed. In proportion, then, that this is compassed, however feebly, in the same proportion does the man achieve successful life. Truth revealed to the soul must be used, or it will vanish. If used, the revelation continues and increases in extent and vividness. Ideals and visions are the practical working models of life. They are not flashed before the spiritual recognition merely for entertainment, nor even for solace, but for externalization in life.

In one of the wonderful creations of Vedder, the artist offers a significant lesson in the guise of a woman's figure, seated, her eyes closed, and her hands lying in her lap entangled with threads that seem to inextricably bind and hold them. She is apparently helpless. Fate has imprisoned her in countless fetters. Her hands were fitted to serve, to accomplish, to be useful; but if hands are tied, what can she do? The subtle genius of the artist makes the spectator see that her

fetters are only resistless in her own mind. She has but to lift her hands, and presto! at a touch, a movement, fetters fall off of themselves. In this picture Mr. Vedder has offered one of the most significant lessons in life. For all imprisonment of conditions, all enforced inactivity, dissolve into thin air before an effort of the will. Man *can* do that which he resolves to do. Not instantaneously nor miraculously, but the moment the will asserts its power, that moment circumstances begin to fall into line and become malleable. The desire for a given thing has but to be intensified into a conscious, intelligent choice — and all the entanglements and barriers dissolve into thin air. They have no foundation, no constructive quality in themselves. Our best moments, Phillips Brooks was fond of saying, are not departures from ourselves, but are the only moments when we are really ourselves. These are the substantial moments, while the rest are more nearly phantasmagoria. "It was given unto me," wrote Dante in the *Vita Nuova*, "to behold a very wonderful vision; wherein I saw things that determined me." The vision may be given at any time. It is given when it is asked for and prayed for and desired. Circum-

stances are merely fluidic and assume any form that the spirit, in determination and will, shall stamp upon them. And so, one need never despond nor despair. Let him seek to unite his will with the will of God ; let him merge his aspirations in all that makes for the greater good of life, and to him shall appear new combinations of event and association as material out of which to fashion a more significant and a more satisfactory order of living. "There is an elemental essence — a strange living essence," writes an English essayist, "which surrounds us on every side, and which is singularly susceptible to human thought. This essence responds with the most wonderful delicacy to the faintest action of the mind or desire, and it is interesting to note how it is affected when the human mind formulates a definite purposeful thought or wish. The effect produced is of the most striking nature." The chief aim in this science of living, perhaps, is to unify the life which one lives with the life that he knows and feels that he ought to live. One sees them as two paths, apart ; can they be identified into one ? It is a fact as interesting as it is true that there can be no achievement of life so improbable, or so seemingly impossible that it cannot be realized

by the power — that absolutely invincible power — of spiritual fidelity to the divine leading. Let one hold his purpose in thought, and the unseen forces thus generated shall work for him day and night. Thought as a force — the most potent force in the world — sets up a vibration in the ethereal atmosphere that holds irresistible sway.

The varied experiences of life are “just a stuff to try the soul’s strength on.” The nature of the ethereal world is to be discerned within one’s own larger life. Qualities, not scenic environments, determine its reality. The ethereal world is here and now. In it we live and move and have our being. We begin our life in the ethereal while still imprisoned in the physical. The ethereal realm is that of the positive realities. It is the realm of causes, while the physical is the world of effects. Stephen Phillips expressed a scientific as well as a spiritual truth in the lines :

I tell you we are fooled by the eye, the ear ;  
These organs muffle us from the real world  
That lies about us. . . .

The nature of the ethereal world can only be truly studied by spiritual progression, which

thus enables the man to more and more lay hold on the divine life; to so live now and here that "The Lord shall be to thee an everlasting light and thy God thy glory!"



## CHAPTER VII

### CREATIVE AGENCIES OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

“From unreality lead me to the real; from darkness to light; from death to Immortality.”

TAGORE.

“The soul, from the fact of its being of the same essence as all creation, possesses a marvelous power. One who possesses the secret is enabled to rise in science, and all knowledge as high as his imagination will carry him; but he does that only on the condition of becoming closely united with this universal force.”

CICERO. “De Natura Deorum.”

NO one can live at his best until the mystic indwelling spirit of the Christ has entered into the personal life as its organizing force, as the source of thought, as the promoter and inspirer of the application of thought to purpose and affairs. The suggestions that are leading to an increasing recognition of the indwelling spirit and to increasing reliance on its power, are uni-

versal. These aids are by no means limited to sects, cults, or to religious and ethical teachers. One finds William James saying that the hours that he spent with Agassiz so impressed him with the difference between the abstractionists and those who lived in the light of the world's concrete fulness that he was never able to forget it. Similar affirmations might be made regarding nearly all the great scientists. The question of the spiritualization of life is one that receives illumination from every phase of human inquiry and knowledge.

For what need I of book or priest,  
Or sibyl from the mummied East,  
When every star is Bethlehem Star?

The relations of man to God emerge from the merely abstract and are more and more brought within the definite grasp of every order of life. From Plato to Eucken is seen an unbroken chain of man's quest for the divine.

Nor need one too greatly concern himself with circumstances, for they are polarized by character. There is a mysterious power inherent in man to act upon outward things; a psychic law not fully formulated, but instinctively used. Cicero suggests the explanation in the paragraph

quoted from his "De Natura Deorum" at the opening of this chapter. The soul possesses a marvellous power, he says, because it is of the same essence as all creation; but it can only exercise this power by becoming united with this universal force. To relate this invincible power to practical, daily use is the single aim pursued in myriad ways. In the general agreement the body must be so trained as to become the obedient servant of the spirit. Theosophy emphasizes this truth and presents a series of formulas for the training, all having to do with diet, hours of sleep, exercise, and activities to bring every fibre into plastic and instantaneous response to the higher command. While Theosophy lays stress upon three beliefs — universal brotherhood, reincarnation, and karma — only one of these, that of brotherhood, is binding on Theosophy as a sect, the other two being matters of individual acceptance or rejection. Karma, being only the law of cause and effect, is hardly likely to encounter much denial from its self-evident nature. Reincarnation is another matter; and while a student of the spiritual life can hardly fail to recognize the probability (if not the inevitability) of a series of progressive periods with definite

beginnings and terminations like birth and death, and while the theory that the spiritual man may wear out many successive physical bodies in gaining its experience on earth appeals to many minds, it need not be crystallized into a dogma. The objection sometimes made by persons only partially familiar with this hypothesis, — that reincarnation and psychical communication are mutually exclusive, is really seen to be baseless after a larger acquaintance with the theory. For reincarnation postulates long periods between death and rebirth, periods of varying length, many sometimes reaching to two thousand or more years. There are many arguments in favor of this theory ; it certainly offers a logical explanation of the inequalities of life and suggests possible explanations for many problems ; as, for instance, sudden and strong attachments or equally sudden and strong antipathies, for neither of which the individual who feels them could give any reasonable explanation. But there is no logical proof of the truth of the theory. From its very nature, it is impossible to verify it in any way that science would accept for a moment. It is true that there are persons who believe that they remember their past incarnations ; but this convic-

tion is totally unprovable. In case a man should believe that he was the reincarnation of Socrates, or Julius Cæsar, or Charlemagne, who could decide, even the man himself, to what extent the affinity, or identity or association that he felt with the character was not due to his reading, to unconscious assimilation, to some possible temperamental likeness, to a thousand causes beyond absolute scrutiny. On the other hand, if the individual of the past was not an historic character, whose traits and conditions were to some extent embalmed in literature, then there would be no record by which he could trace any resemblance. That a haunting sense of recognition of people or places often seizes one is a fact that cannot be denied. But this reminiscence — what is it? The immaterial universe is so infinite; the spirit is free in so many as yet unrecognized unformulated conditions, that its records may be those of a palimpsest. Dante Gabriel Rossetti has wonderfully embodied this reminiscence in his poem entitled "Sudden Light."

I have been here before,  
But when or how I cannot tell;  
I know the grass beyond the door,  
The sweet keen smell,  
The sighing sound, the lights around the shore.

Theosophy explains reincarnation on this principle of consciousness in evolution: that the soul enters this life, "not as a fresh creation, but after a long course of previous existences on this earth and elsewhere, in which it has acquired its present inherent peculiarities, and that it is on the way to future transformations which the soul is now shaping. It claims that infancy brings to earth, not a blank scroll for the beginning of an earthly record, nor a mere cohesion of atomic forces into a brief personality soon to dissolve again into the elements, but that it is inscribed with ancestral histories, some like the present scene, most of them unlike it and stretching back into the remotest past. These inscriptions are generally undecipherable, save as revealed in their molding influence upon the new career; but like the invisible photographic images made by the sun of all it sees, when properly developed in the laboratory of consciousness, they will be distinctly displayed. The current phase of life will also be stored away in the secret vaults of memory, for its unconscious effect upon ensuing lives. All the qualities we now possess, in body, mind, and soul, result from our use of ancient opportunities. We are alone responsible for our inheritances.

For these present conditions accrue from distant causes engendered by our older selves, and the future flows by the divine law of cause and effect from the gathered momentum of our past impetuses. There is no favoritism in the universe, but all have the same everlasting facilities for growth. Those who are now elevated in worldly station may be sunk in humble surroundings in the future. Only the inner traits of the soul are permanent companions. The wealthy sluggard may be the beggar of his next life, and the noble worker of the present, he who works in a noble spirit, is sowing the seeds of future greatness. Suffering bravely endured now will produce a treasure of patience and fortitude in another life; hardships will give rise to strength; self-denial must develop the will; tastes cultivated in this existence will bear fruit in coming ones; and acquired energies will assert themselves whenever they can, by the *lex parsimoniæ* upon which the principles of physics are founded. Vice versa, the unconscious habits, the uncontrollable impulses, the peculiar tendencies, the favorite pursuits, and the soul-stirring friendships of the present descend from far-reaching previous activities. . . . That we have forgotten the causes pro-

ducing the present sequence of pleasures and pains, talents and defects, is no disproof of them, and does not disturb the justice of the scheme."

During the ethereal sojourns between repeated incarnations, mental experiences are transmitted into mental faculties. Thus, according to this theory, each return is with a larger content of consciousness than before. Cycles repeat themselves, until the crude spirit grows into finer manifestation; until aspiration becomes talent, and talent becomes genius. Every individual builds himself, creates his own future, holds in his own keeping his future destiny. His successive environments are not arbitrarily imposed upon him; there are no "favorites of fortune", nor the reverse; but there is perpetual cause and effect. There is absolutely nothing that any individual may not achieve in time, if he be but faithful to the highest revealed to him.

The books say well, my brothers! each man's life

The outcome of his former living is;

The bygone wrongs bring forth sorrows and woes;

The bygone right breeds bliss.

What hath been bringeth what shall be, and is;

Worse, better, last for first and first for last;



The angels in the heaven of gladness, reap  
Fruits of a holy past.

Reminiscence has been instanced as a proof of repeated incarnations, but the states of consciousness are still too little known to be reduced to any exact beliefs. The entire realm is still largely conjectural rather than one to be formulated into convictions. That reminiscence is a very general experience, as well as a poetic fancy, is undeniable. Paul Hamilton Hayne has embodied this vague, haunting feeling that almost every one knows in a poem entitled "Pre-Existence", opening with these lines:

While sauntering through the crowded street  
Some half-remembered face I meet,  
Albeit on no mortal shore  
That face hath smiled on me before.

Poetic literature abounds in the expression of this experience of a tantalizing familiarity with scenes or with persons which just eludes the definite capture of memory. From Wordsworth's immortal "Ode", back to ancient Greek poetry, and on to contemporary verse, it continually increases.

Reminiscence may be due to impressions long

since forgotten, but recorded by the subliminal self; to reading and forgotten glimpses into some book at a casual moment, and, among other causes, to experiences in the ethereal world when liberated by sleep, that remain as memories. All these offer many possible explanations of reminiscence, without admitting that of preceding lives on earth. The tantalizing remembrance, the strange recognition of scenes visited for the first time that yet seem familiar; the stranger who seems like a life-long friend, the situation that one suddenly feels he has been involved in before all these may be connected with the experiences encountered when partially free from the physical world at night. This is not at all to deny the possibility of the reincarnation theory; in fact, there is no other constructive theory of life that is so self-evident, in many ways, as this; no other theory which so fits facts and explains groups of facts and combines them with coherency and significance. Whether the series of lives are lived on this planet, by the method of successive rebirths into this world, or whether lives elsewhere, does not materially affect the theory of repeated periods with definite beginnings and terminations. Emerson has noted that we seem

to find ourselves on a stair ; there are steps below ; there are steps above. Whither we have come, whence we go, are questions we cannot answer. We know as little about what experiences we have already come through as we do to what experiences we are tending. Up to a certain degree of development this planet, for aught we know, may furnish as good a school for the soul as any other. And the theosophical teaching is that after achieving a certain degree of spiritual advancement, there is no more return to life on earth. In his "Esoteric Buddhism", Alfred Percy Sinnett expresses his own convictions, gained by a profound study of Oriental philosophies, that man is composed of seven principles ; the body, vitality, the astral body, the animal soul, the human soul, the spiritual soul, and spirit. "Certainly," says Mr. Sinnett, "it would be impossible for even the most skillful professor of occult science to exhibit each of these principles separate and distinct from the others, as the physical elements of a compound body can be separated by analysis and preserved independently of each other. The elements of a physical body are all on the same plane of materiality, but the elements of man are on very different planes." Mr. Sinnett de-

fines each of these principles at some length in their relations and affinities with substance; and he teaches that the average man has as yet developed only the first four principles, and that the fifth, the human soul, is not yet fully developed in the inhabitants of the earth; that the sixth principle, the Spiritual Soul, "is still in embryo and is not even embodied in man in his present state, but is something toward which the highest aspirations of the nature must work. Pure spirit, then, remains very far in advance of man." The evolutionary progress of humanity is by no means limited to the possibilities of earth. It would be irrational and opposed to every analogy of nature as seen in all the varied existences of the universe, to suppose that the comparatively brief sojourn of man on earth could determine his spiritual state and environment for all eternity. "Once admit the progress beyond this life," argues Mr. Sinnett, "and we admit the idea of a variety hardly compatible with any other hypothesis than that of progress in successive worlds. The life and evolutionary processes of this planet are linked with the life and evolutionary processes of several other planets. But let it not be supposed that there is no finality as regards the scheme of this planetary

union to which we belong. That idea would involve a serious misconception. The system of worlds is a circuit round which all individual spiritual entities must pass — the higher evolution will be accomplished by our progress through the successive worlds; and in higher forms we shall return to this earth again and again. Between each physical existence the individual passes through a period of existence in the corresponding spiritual world." Thus Theosophy postulates a planetary chain as the successive environments for man's spiritual progress up to a prescribed degree of development. Doctor Draper, in his great work, "The Intellectual Development of Europe", touches closely on this theory and says; "Over the events of life we may have control, but none whatever over the law of its progress. There is a geometry that applies to nations an equation of their curve of advance. That no mortal man can touch."

One of the most authoritative and illuminating papers on reincarnation, presenting it as a logical hypothesis with much, if not sufficient claim to provide a rational explanation for the mysteries of being, was that written by Professor William Angus Knight, D.D., LL.D., who for forty

years held the chair of philosophy and Christian ethics in the University of St. Andrews — a paper that appeared in *The Fortnightly Review* for September, 1878. In this we find Professor Knight saying :

The ethical leverage of the doctrine of reincarnation is immense. Its motive power is great. It reveals as magnificent a background to the present life, with its contradictions and disasters, as the prospect of immortality opens up an illimitable foreground, lengthening out the horizon of hope. It binds together the past and the present and the future in one ethical series of cause and effects, the inner thread of which is both personal to the individual and impersonal, connecting him with two eternities, one behind and one before. With peculiar emphasis it proclaims the survival of moral individuality and personal identity along with the final adjustment of external conditions to the inner state of the agent.

Again Professor Knight says, regarding the objection that we do not remember our past lives, that "The absence of memory of any actions done in a previous state cannot be a conclusive argument against our having lived through it." Indeed, it might be asked what portion of our present

life is vividly within the recall of memory? The period of infancy is completely a blank, and the recollections of childhood are fragmentary and elusive, as are, indeed, more or less of even recent recollections, as those of last year, for instance, or of a decade in the past or even last week. Certain events, certain days or moments, stand out; certain experiences remain vivid, while a mass of others are submerged. That they are registered, however, in the subconscious, is abundantly proved by the results and disclosures of hypnotic experiments, by trance and by somnambulistic phenomena. The memory is the most curiously treacherous of faculties. How frequently in conversation a name that one knows as well as he knows his own name suddenly eludes him, as he is about to speak it; and all effort to recall it only seems to induce its deeper oblivion; but leave it, pass on to other topics, and presto! it as suddenly leaps up as it disappeared; and apparently with no more reason for the one than for the other.

Professor Knight not only suggests that the absence of memory is not a conclusive evidence that we have not had previous lives, but he adds:

Forgetfulness of the past may be one of the conditions of an entrance upon a new stage of existence.

The body, which is the organ of sense perception, may be quite as much a hindrance as a help to remembrance. In that case casual gleams of memory, giving us sudden abrupt and momentary revelations of the past, are precisely the phenomena we would expect to meet with if the soul has preëxisted. What we would, *a priori*, anticipate are only some faint traces of recollection surviving in the crypts of memory.

Leibnitz has pointed out how some sudden and unforeseen stimulus acting on sense perception opens up a world of supersensuous reality to illustrate how erroneous are our common notions of memory. "Oriental philosophy may be right in affirming that as a man's series of lives become purer, he is able to look backward upon previous stages, and at last to view the long vista of the æons by which he has ascended to God."

The process of successive rebirths seems to have been an instinctive belief of humanity from the earliest periods. Among the strongest advocates in mediæval times were Bonaventura and Erigena. The doctrine was held by the Rosicrucians. It was taught by Jacob Böhme and by the great mystic known as Paracelsus, whose name was Theophrastus von Hohenheim (born in 1493)



and whose "Book of True Principles", published in Basle in 1563, inspired Robert Browning's youthful poem, "Paracelsus." Fichte, in his "Destiny of Man", has said :

These two systems, the purely spiritual and the sensuous — which last may consist of an immeasurable series of particular lives — exist in me from the moment when my active reason is developed, and pursue their parallel course. After an existence of myriad lives the supersensuous world cannot be more present than at this moment. — Man is not a product of the world of sense; and the end of his existence can never be attained in that world. His destination lies beyond time and space and all that pertains to sense.

No one who studies thoughtfully the phenomena of the universe can regard it as at all incredible that the spiritual man should wear out a relay of mortal bodies in gaining his experience; nor that, up to a certain degree of development, this world does not offer as favorable a place as any other for the gaining of this experience.

The seven principles of man as defined by Mr. Sinnett offer only a finer and a more purely speculative analysis than the ordinary divisions of the physical body, the ethereal body, and the spirit.

There are many treatises defining and differentiating soul and spirit, and other discriminations that may be true enough but which are more important to the abstract considerations of metaphysics than they are to applied spiritual philosophy. When Matthew Arnold affirmed that conduct is three fourths of life, he offered a practical truth. And it is with conduct that all the more valuable considerations of the phenomena of life are chiefly concerned. The theories of reincarnation contemplate the periods of physical life on earth as but a minor fraction of the period in the spiritual world before the next incarnation. The larger part of the time is passed in the ethereal and spiritual realms, and rebirth ceases when the individual has achieved entire detachment from material things. This does not mean that while sojourning in the physical life he shall not use and employ these for his purposes, but only that he shall not identify himself with his possessions. So long as man does thus identify himself, he is under material bondage.

Things are in the saddle  
And ride mankind,

said Emerson in allusion to the tyranny of the material.

To be exempt from the tyranny of things; to regard all possessions as conveniences, as gifts with which to work, as tools, so to speak, for the time being — it is this attitude that is helpful to an increasing detachment from things, and an increasing liberation of spiritual force. It is not that poverty represents an ideal. On the contrary. The ideal condition of society will only be attained when there is *no* poverty. But when, or if, a great fortune is built up through injustice to the man's fellow-beings, it is the pernicious spiritual danger implied in losing his soul. "There is that scattereth, yet increaseth." There is the power, the intelligent and splendid power, to amass wealth in honorable ways and to thus have the resources of that wealth to make the world better. The great enterprises of the world are largely due to the power of capital, without which transportation and commerce, education and culture, and the extension of religious enlightenment as well, would signally suffer. The theory, then, of detachment from material possessions, does not mean fanaticism. It does not mean to discard or to undervalue the appliances of advanced civilization. It means to use them wisely for the temporary sojourn on earth, but to always see in them the

means to an end, and not an end in and of themselves. How marvellously the picture, "For He Had Great Possessions" by George Frederic Watts, offers a symbolic interpretation of this truth. The artist is embodying the message contained in the incident narrated by St. Mark (10, 17 to 22, inclusive) where the young man comes to Jesus and asks what he shall do that he may inherit eternal life? The reply grieved him, "for he had great possessions." Mr. Watts pictures the full-length figure; the turbaned head, turned away from the spectator; the rich garments, the brilliant mantle, the ringed fingers with their grasping look; and a more eloquent lesson was never given as to the relative values of mere possessions; of the things of transient pleasure, and, on the other hand, the eternal joyousness of spirituality. To transfer one's entire life into the keeping of Jesus, the Christ, is to transform that life and to experience a new personal creation. It is to acquire a secret spring of an infinite and resistless energy. It is to regard all the outlook of life from a higher plane. To enter the next stage of progress with detachment from material possessions is to enter on conditions of interest and of happiness. For what happiness can there be for one whose

only interests are bound up with the physical world when removed from that world? All that has given him enjoyment and constant zest has vanished; and the conditions in which he finds himself are unrelated to his interests. He has not laid hold on eternal life, on the spiritualized conditions of which that life is made. Naturally, it would seem, such a man would be drawn back to earth again and again in repeated incarnations until he shall have freed his soul from being absorbed only in material possessions. This is, in outline, the theosophical theory of reincarnation, and it is not without its logical, if not convincing, appeal.

What, then, are the creative agencies of the spiritual life? For upon the answer to this question hang all the law and the prophets. Upon this answer depend man's success and happiness. Is not an initial step the realization that the visible world in which we live is only one part of the spiritual universe in which it exists and from which it derives its power and its most enduring significance? Is not an initiative of incalculable value the learning to adjust ourselves to this larger spiritual universe to which we belong, of which we are a part, and to whose laws we are amenable?

And the one supreme means of adjustment is by prayer. For prayer focusses the spiritual energy that may be brought to bear on the phenomenal world and provides for it the channel for its entrance, the conditions over which and by means of which it may pass. Man may even be associated with God in conscious creative evolution. We find Bergson saying, "*La vie, depuis ses origines, est la continuation d'un seul et même élan qui s'est partagé entre des lignes d'évolution divergentes.*"

The environment in which man has existed has been one somewhat inimical to his higher evolution. Strangely, the war, which one would deem the worst of evils, is so acting on the social and the economic conditions of the world as to produce an entirely new environment. That it will be one more favorable to this higher evolution there can be no question. Prohibition, for which Archdeacon Wilberforce, Lady Henry Somerset, Frances Willard, and numbers of others have worked so unremittingly for more than twenty years, on the grounds of moral reform, is now apparently to come as an economic measure. Other radical changes in the body politic are too familiar to require allusion. We are in the midst of a

changing world. Old conditions are being swept away to make room for the new. Even in the matter of meat as a food, economic reasons are now operating to the same end as that urged by reformers on the spiritual plane of life.

All these forces are among the creative agencies of the spiritual life; a life to be lived here and now as well as hereafter, and only to be lived hereafter because it is entered upon in the present.

The will to believe is the will to live aright. It is one's consecration, and his firm resolve to live in accordance with such truth is the only basis for the more ideal life. The environment must be woven of these divine realities. It is to their vibration that we must respond. Through every day's experiences runs the supernormal intervention which must be recognized and with which all purposes must be coördinated that one may enter into the mystic experiences by which he is transformed.

## CHAPTER VIII

### MAKE ROOM FOR HAPPINESS

“The Flower of Life is a gift, without money and without price. The supreme gift of the gods can neither be discussed nor deserved. Believe in Happiness; expect it; make room for it in your life. Have Faith; Faith moves mountains. And Happiness is of the swift-footed immortals, and descends only on the garlanded altars of her worshippers.”

From “Vestigia.”

“Hold on; hope hard in the subtle thing  
That’s spirit; though cloistered fast, soar free.”

BROWNING.

**H**APPINESS is so entirely a matter of the spirit that it must be included among the eternal verities of life. Possessions and gratifications have singularly little to do with that which is the real joy of life; the order of happiness that is ecstasy, as Emerson says life should be — the life in which “every touch should thrill”, and which is sensitively responsive



to the higher order of vibrations. Happiness is really an intense spiritual force — an electro-spiritual force, even, so compact of the luminiferous ether as to act upon conditions with the force of magic. With happiness as one's possession, of how little consequence, comparatively, are all the other conditions of life! Wealth or poverty; successes or failures; gratifications or denials — how they retire into the background as the merely incidental and accidental matters of the hour that hold no sway over one's essential life. For to suppose that happiness depends upon wealth, successes, gratifications, is to utterly mistake its real quality. This is not to deny that these things are pleasant, are desirable; and that happiness may even be enhanced by them; but only to suggest that, of themselves alone, they neither constitute nor guarantee happiness. Nor must happiness be regarded as at all synonymous with pleasure. The latter is more or less transient and trivial; the former is a factor of the eternal life. Happiness attends him who has so gained poise of mind that outer difficulties and loss, privation or disaster, do not seriously disturb him. When Emerson was assured by a fanatic that the world was about to come

to an end, he calmly remarked that he thought he could get along without it. One may recall a stanza of Victor Hugo's, which in translation runs :

Be like a bird that, on a twig alighted,  
Beneath him bends and swings ;  
Still he sings on, in peace, all unaffrighted,  
Knowing he hath his wings.

Happiness gives wings to the spirit. It bears one safely over all gulfs and chasms of depression. It is a spiritual gift, but like all gifts can be nurtured and indefinitely increased in its vitality and activity, or it can be starved and dwarfed and rendered inactive. The choice lies with the individual. Infelicities come; well, "Lift up the heart!" The loss, the disaster, has not wrecked one's inner and more significant life. They mar the outward conditions, these infelicities and disasters; they are inconvenient, they are perplexing; they involve sacrifice in various ways; they involve hardships; granted all this, yet still within the cloud the glory lives on undimmed. "We are not hurt until our souls are hurt", and nothing can harm the soul save one's own voluntary sin. His misfortunes do not harm his soul in the least.

It is not in the power of any other being to harm his essential life. He who, in the face of calamity or trouble, can so control his mind as to think no evil, and who radiates cheerfulness and harmony, is already, in the permanent sense, helped and not harmed by his disaster. No one has any moral right to allow himself to sink into depression. "If you are depressed," says Annie Besant, "the Master cannot use you to send His life through you to the helping of the brethren. Depression is like a dam built across the stream, preventing the waters from right flowing." Nor does misfortune invariably obstruct the path to a certain desirable end or aim; it may offer another route which we afterward recognize as far preferable to that on which we first set out. The apparent ill fortune is not infrequently the initiation to a new realm of ideas, a vantage ground not heretofore dreamed of, but which is a distinctive gain. One need never be afraid of misfortune. The hidden necromancy of life is of such a nature that in a day, in an hour, it may sometimes be wholly transformed; and if not? What then? It is experience. It is happiness which is designated by this passage from the Buddhistic philosophy:

There is a mental state so happy, so glorious, that all the rest of life is worthless compared to it — a pearl of great price to buy which a wise man willingly sells all that he has. This state can be achieved.

As for possessions and things and accumulations — they are encumbrances as well. They have their uses, but they also entail their penalties. When Jesus counselled, "Seek ye first the kingdom of righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you", He designated under another phrase this heavenly achievement of happiness. Thoreau alludes to this exaltation in the stanza:

I hearing get who had but ears,  
And sight, who had but eyes before;  
I moments live who lived but years,  
And truth discern who knew but learning's lore!

The depths of meaning that lie in the assertion, "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature", is a truth included in this spiritual state.

The new note in life is joyousness. "Verily, from the everlasting joy do all objects have their birth," well says Rabindranath Tagore. It is as true as it is significant. Joy is the creative force, and in so far as we wander from it do we become negative and imprisoned. The spirit

is only joyous when it is free, and when it is free it is invariably joyous. But, practically, how shall we attain this condition? And if we occasionally attain it, how shall we hold it as the permanent atmosphere in which to live? We complain of lack of time, but it is not time that we lack, but the energy to make that time potent. One hour, in the right conditions, will do the work of many. Duration is far less a factor than the power we are able to bring to bear on that duration.

All this investiture of joyfulness is far from being a "fool's paradise." It is not unthinking and negative indifference to good. It is the very highest vibratory energy. It is the laying hold on the eternal forces. It is the mounting of a stair. It is the achieving of power hitherto unknown and unconquered. It is coming into that receptive condition through which alone divine aid can freely flow. This ocean of ether in which we live is all energy. We can draw on it for our creation of thought forms. When we create in the ether, our part is done; then the divine power stamps these creations with the reality that renders them applicable to our daily life. There is no limit to the achievement of him

who understands the law. It is an initiation. It is the entrance on The Path. And it is a three-fold matter, of mind, and body, and soul. The physical body must be brought into, and kept in, a responsive state to all the higher and finer vibrations. It is not that there is anything so intrinsically evil, or good, in certain habits; it is that if these habits keep better things away, if they are a barrier through which the higher vibrations cannot pass, then by that test they are undesirable.

As a matter of simple truth, only that life is rich which never misses the opportunity to do a kindness. Shall one let a day become a mere rush of engagements or of industrial occupation? Shall this priceless gift of life degenerate into a mad pursuit for which the allotted time is quite inadequate? There are people who rush thus breathlessly and incoherently from morning till night; who assure you that they "have no time" for anything. One woman declares that she does not read, she has no time! Multitudes of women write no letters — there is no time! The woman of this order has no time for personal friendships, for quiet conversations; she receives her friends, *en masse*, on her "day" (if, indeed, she

even keeps a day at all), and the guest barely says Hail! and Farewell! to the hostess and if he or she attempts further conversational interchange, she is politely invited to pass into the refreshment room and have a cup of tea. If a woman of this order is impressed with an illuminating idea that she should read the poetry of Robert Browning, she joins a Browning Club. Apparently, the enjoyment of a poet must be gregarious. Or again, it is a saving of time, and as she "hasn't any time", this economic device is to be considered. If she has occasion to invite a friend to dine she invites a dozen, that she may thus thriftily check off her obligations. It is little wonder that Paul Bourget, when he visited this country, exclaimed: "At what time do they die here? At what time do they love? When do they think?" Now in all this mad rush of activities do we lose our energy? Are we so submerged that we cannot enjoy even our privileges? There is the utmost deference paid to the saving of time. If one train is due at its destination ten minutes before another, we are ready to barter all our hopes of heaven in order to "make" that train. But what do we do with all this time that we "save"?

That the age is growing more sordid, selfish, materialistic, is not true. Never at any period of the world's history were the higher and nobler purposes of life more in evidence. They are reflected in the new laws that are being enacted; the new legislation is almost startlingly potent in the betterment of social conditions. Public sentiment is enlightened and liberal. The time is not remote, even if it is not already within sight, when a man will be ashamed to be rich and comfortable if his neighbor is in poverty and discomfort. It would almost seem to him as it would if he seized by force upon all the choicest viands of a banquet to which he was bidden, regardless of the presence of other guests. The great inventions correspond with all this intense rush of activity. Everything is time-saving and labor-saving. Now to what end? The sociologists have an expression for a definite phase of culture as *the art of living well with one's kind*. This implies the development of both justice and generosity; of sacrifice and consideration. Man is learning to live aright, and that achievement means to be able to control the powers of earth and air.

Where, indeed, lies the room for happiness?



Where is to be traced the pathway of the joyous life? In what heights or depths lies the mystic key? Tagore, apostle of the life of the spirit, says :

*"From joy are born all creatures; by joy they are sustained; toward joy they progress, and into joy they enter."*

Is the pathway of the joyous life, the room for happiness, only to be found in some vague and remote Utopia, in the land where nothing is but what is not? Is it only a summer allurement of rose-strewn and myrtle-edged ways, with some vista of blue waters and golden sunsets? Is it only for the holidays and not for the working days? Is it only for the fortunate few, and denied to the toiling numbers? For if the pathway of joyous life is only for festal rambles, it is not to be greatly considered. To leave all flowery metaphor, is not the absolute foundation of all joy the consciousness of duties faithfully performed? Of bills paid when due? Of work performed with timeliness as well as with adequate skill; of each day's obligations checked off, so to speak, as nearly as possible, as they come? Happiness is not evading just obligations; in

fact there is no real happiness until they are fulfilled.

What most conduces to the joyousness of mind?

First of all, freedom of spirit. One is no longer in mental bondage as he is while held by the dead weight of things undone which ought to be done; he is set free in that spiritual space which is infinite energy. It is quite possible that he may not be at all able to take the wings of the morning and fly to the uttermost parts of the earth, but he feels as if he could. He has that wonderful sense of infinitude that now and then falls upon us all. Could it become universal, and could it protract itself, the efficiency of human life would be multiplied an hundred-fold. In any case, this sense of spiritual release is followed by a great inflow of power. The reward of one achievement is the power to undertake another. For life is perpetual progress, and one must prove himself anew every day. This renewal and reinforcement of energy has as its sequence some wonderful results. Doubt and hesitation and depression are paralyzing influences; for life is lived by faith, and it is a combination and a grouping of spiritual results

that make its fiber and its quality. The energy of joy invests each day with the eager interest of romance. Life becomes an Adventure Beautiful. There is no such thing as a dull day, any more; there is no monotony; on the contrary the days are not long enough for all the interests that crowd them. For we must never lose sight of the truth that life is a spiritual experience, — its continuity uninterrupted by the change of death — and an endless progress of increasing significance. In the ordinary days, as they come and go, every event is twofold. There is the outer detail; there is the spiritual result. Take, for instance, the interruptions that occur to every one. He may declare that he will not be interrupted, no matter who calls, or what happens; but it is a rash resolve, and one that is indeed better in the breach than in the observance. For no man liveth to himself. One may set aside a morning with the firm resolve that whether the foundations of the earth be overturned, still he will not, because he cannot, endure any break upon his special pursuit. If a caller comes, why he may go. If a telegram, or a "special delivery" arrives, it must wait. So much for the fancied heroism. Suddenly

there arrives an editor who wishes to consult at once upon an important series of papers; or the friend supposed to be in India, or at the antipodes, is pressing the electric button; or a neighbor over the way, who is destined to give a reading that evening from "The Ring and the Book", discovers she has loaned that particular volume, and can she borrow your own? A thousand things of which these are typical are liable to happen; as a matter of fact they usually do happen, in just that particular time you had set apart for your own special needs. What is to be done about it?

One would need to be a saint in paradise, rather than a more or less defective being on earth, not to be sometimes impatient, even irritated, at the apparent malevolence of circumstance. A moment before and he was exalted, caught up into the very atmosphere of harmonious energy. He was in the mental state in which one hour will often do the work of an entire day. "Has one's own individuality actually no rights?" mentally exclaims the unfortunate victim.

Precisely here are the possibilities of the spiritual results. This is the moment to renew the

mind. Let us recognize in each event that occurs the divine leading; the divine will, for that moment. God reveals the path by indications. Let us not oppose it, setting up friction and barriers; on the contrary, let us joyously accept and embrace it. You are about to go to a *matinée*, and behold, a visitor, undreamed of, appears. Shall he be dismissed with scant courtesy? Or shall you say, "Here is God's call; here is a leading. God has something for me to do, to learn, to give, or to accept." Suppose, then, that the ticket is given to some one who can go; who longs to go, and could not, otherwise, and you turn to a new interest. Not that this supposed case should invariably be followed in this precise way; the leading might be to keep to the engagement and postpone, or deny, the caller who claimed attention.

Life is too entirely an affair of spiritual adjustment for any hard and fast rules to be laid down; but there may not unduly be always the presumption that if the special demand is made on you, or on me, then it is you, or I, whom God has chosen to meet this demand. "Here am I, Lord; send me!" becomes the general attitude of life. And in the meeting, the acceptance, the

fulfillment, is the joy. Have we not all, sometimes, found ourselves tramping through mud, or sleet, or storm, arrayed in our worst old toggery, and eager and ardent to reach the place we have set out for, or to enter on the work waiting for us in the office, the schoolroom, the studio, or the shop? Past us may glide the people in their motor cars, with all the appointments of liberal wealth, but have we not often realized how very little inclination we have to change places with them?

Indeed, if the pathway of joyous life were paved only with gold, if it led to portals opened only by golden keys, it would hardly be worth discussion. But it is our universal heritage. We have but to open our eyes and recognize it; to reach out our hands and grasp it. There is no limitation on the part of God. He gives us, only too joyfully, all of greatness and energy and holiness that we can receive. Happiness, then, depends so very little, singularly little, upon outward things. Pleasure, comfort, convenience, all these rely almost entirely upon the conditions of the outward life. They depend upon the weather, on income, on health, and they depend, sometimes to an almost tragical degree, upon

the actions or decisions of other people. The conditions that perhaps most affect our pleasures and conveniences and comfort are, by a paradox, largely those over which we have least personal control. But one's happiness is absolutely within his own control.

Now this spiritual attitude has the most practical effect on our daily life. It is an anchorage from which no incidents or accidents of the outer life can sweep us away. Many adverse things may happen — that is all in the day's work; but they do not overwhelm or sweep into chaos the man who has this firm foundation. It is Sanctuary, so to speak, of which the spiritual being cannot be deprived. He may deprive himself of it in one way, — that is, by wilful wrongdoing; he may deprive himself of it by selfishness, and unkindness, almost as surely as by treachery, or sin, or crime. But this rests with himself. So long as he keeps his soul in receptivity to the divine forces, he is happy.

It would be a very shallow and flippant view of life that could leave unrecognized the marvellous ministry of sorrow. Even the One Perfect Life, that of Jesus, the Christ, was not complete in its manifestation on earth until he had

experienced such tragedy of suffering as few of His followers have ever been led to undergo. But see with what spirit He met this suffering. Sorrow and suffering are divine initiations. They are among the great series of tests that every life must encounter in its onward and upward way. "In the world ye shall have tribulation." The world means the outer conditions in which we must linger until we have learned to overcome them. If I do not learn my lesson out of the trial that I encounter this year, why I must encounter it again. I must encounter it until I extract from it its blessing. Not its penalty, but its blessing. If I am careless and thus lose my purse, I must learn not to be careless. If I am careless regarding the rights or the feelings of my friend, and thus lose my friend, I must learn to let love and consideration rule me. There is a wise philosophy, one might well say an occult wisdom, in making friends with one's infelicities. Instead of being impatient or discouraged, why not say: In some way I need this lesson; it is an opportunity, because, once mastering it, I am ready for a higher round. "To him that overcometh" is the promise. Life is full of miracle-workings. All the great



"Captains of Industry", were their lives revealed from the traditional struggling boyhood up to the high and responsible places won by industry and integrity — all these could relate the strange coincidences, the apparently incredible conjunctions of circumstances, that have formed the ladder by which they ascended.

What does the Poet say?

Then welcome each rebuff

That turns earth's smoothness rough.

Each sting that bids nor sit, nor stand, but go!

Be our joys three parts pain!

Strive, and hold cheap the strain;

Learn, nor account the pang! Dare, never grudge  
the throe!

It is not only the poets who learn in suffering what they teach in song. It is each and all and every one of us.

Still, these experiences are incidental, they are transmutable, and need not interfere with the currents of joy. Happiness is a radiant energy, and it goes out into the ethereal as a force; it searches the elements that are ready for combination and brings them back to bear on the undertaking. It selects, organizes; it puts the

complex factors on a new basis; it marshals every inherent capability to do its best. It is the creator of efficiency. More than this. Happiness not only makes the best use of the conditions existing, but it creates new ones. The ether of space is a vast reservoir of intellectual and spiritual treasure. Into this unlimited and infinite storehouse happiness projects its searchlight; it discerns, discovers, and appropriates the elements of which success is made. It brings these elements into the realm of the actual. It relates them to the individual capacities. It combines, and applies these intense potencies to the practical, the outward conditions. Thus the new combination is formed. But the personal factor remains the controlling power. Man's place in the cosmic order is far more important than he has perhaps realized. What is he on earth for? For no less purpose than to be a coworker with God. For no less purpose than to relate his own spirit to the divine spirit; to make his powers a channel through which the divine power may flow; to bring his will into perfect harmony with the divine will. Now the acceptance of the divine will is not a merely passive and negative condition — the last resort

of despair. The will of the Lord is not for us to sit down with folded hands and dull, inactive minds and repeat these words as a meaningless formula; the will of the Lord is not an apathetic mental state with benumbed faculties. It is to arise in newness of life. To lift up the heart to God is not merely the privilege of the devotee at the altar; it is the most actual reliance and aid of the man whose hand is on the throttle of the engine; whose skill guides the helm of a trans-Atlantic liner; who is in his office, study, laboratory, or classroom. It is the great practical aid to efficiency for the miner digging deep in the earth, or the laborer ploughing his field.

As we have said, life is a succession of tests. Its course and its quality are determined by a series of choices. There is apparently a given problem to each man, his individual problem, but it is always recurring, involved in a new set of conditions. What is the real meaning of this problem? Does Browning define it in the lines:

Machinery just meant  
To give the soul its bent,  
Try thee and send thee forth sufficiently impressed?

Walt Whitman announces, "It is provided

in the essence of things, that from any fruition of success, no matter what, shall come forth something to make a greater struggle necessary."

There is the charming truth; the significance of one success is to go on to a still greater success. What would have been the use to the world of the discovery of this continent by Columbus if settlements and increasing civilization had not followed? His success was the prelude to the success of the Pilgrim fathers; their success was the prelude to all the marvellous achievements that are flowering in the twentieth century.

Still, the progress of life is not all a triumphant highway of successes, along which garlanded figures stroll, leisurely contemplating their prowess; there is something to be said for failures that lead to a general renovation. Man is himself a creative center of forces. He has the power to act upon these plastic circumstances. His spiritual attitude is the key to every problem of life. Spirit is invincible. If he provides a center around which immortal energies can gather and with which they can work in harmonious combination, he has secured the key to all beauty, all success, all efficiency. He has achieved a spiritual enfranchisement. He has

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opened a portal to a new order of life and light. This is only accomplished by rising to that plane where he may command the situation. He only attains that plane by identifying himself with an ideal through which a new energy enters his being which results in a new order of conditions. These conditions form the path to the Blessed Way. And on this enchanted path he may hear in the air, as if from choral voices, the assurance :

O my brothers and sisters ! It is not chaos or death. It is form, union, plan, —

It is Eternal Life, — it is Happiness !

## CHAPTER IX

### ALSO THE HOLY GHOST, THE COMFORTER

“For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

“Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

ROMANS, viii, 38, 39.

“I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.”

ST. JOHN, xiv, 18.

**T**ENDERLY enfolding all the discipline of life — loss, disaster, hardship, sorrow — is that deepest and most profound and infinite reliance, the divine love — the power that, in the last analysis, creates out of our very undoings a vision of nobler completeness. There is one tenet of Theosophy which is singularly incomplete in and of itself as usually interpreted, and that is the doctrine of karma. Unmis-

takably logical in its truth so far as it goes, and beneficent too, when understood in its completeness, it seems to many to stop short of the divine fulfillment in that it limits results strictly to causes. "As a man soweth, so shall he reap." But in nature itself many things come to help and bless the increase of that which has been sown beyond what man himself can do. He cannot control the sunshine or the rain. It is, in the last analysis, God "who giveth the increase." The same principle is true with regard to karmic law. Man must, it is true, work out his own salvation, but in this he is never left alone. All infinite space between God and man is filled with the ranks of ministering angels, with divine messengers commissioned to give the most bountiful aid in response to the slightest call of the spirit. These messengers are the revealers of the divine will. They are the messengers of love. They are the helpers in every human problem and need. Man cannot ask so freely and so fully as God responds to his cry. Never is this train of ministering angels lessened or lost. The cloud of witnesses is forever present, and every act, every thought, every aspiration, is registered in the unseen. Between man and

his spirit guides the magnetic *rapport* is infinitely intensified by prayer. The richness of the blessings brought to man by this agency, the deeper and more intimate relations established with the divine by the power of prayer, is something beyond expression in language. Nor does this continual exercise of the life of the spirit in any way deplete the vital life. On the contrary, it imparts a new energy, and a joy and exhilaration of the spirit that can never be described, but which is felt almost as strongly as though one were living in miracle regions. When one comes to understand the complex nature of man, this effect is quite capable of being comprehended. In order to sustain himself in the physical world, man must have a physical body as the only instrument of connection between his spiritual self and the physical universe. He has also the vital body composed of ether (the ethereal body) which relates him to the ethereal universe as well. Theosophy postulates a desire body, as the instrument of action; and after that there are also further theoretical states, such as the thought body, before, in fuller development, he at last gains the spiritual body. All these degrees (or bodies) respond to corresponding vibra-



tions of the universe. Included in the life of prayer and of spiritual aspiration are all the wonderful and fascinating vistas of art, poetry, eloquence, "the best that has been thought and uttered in the world", all that we see under the general name of culture, which strengthen and refine and elevate the mind.

In accord with the karmic law, man must work out his own salvation. But if he were not abundantly aided by the divine love, life, even endless life, would become a very Ixion's wheel, upon which man would be bound in an endless series of births and sojourns in the visible world and deaths — repeated again and again; for in what sojourn would he ever come, of his own unaided efforts, to detach himself from material things to that degree which would enable him to enter into the spiritual environment? So beyond all karmic law, which is true so far as it goes, comes the still larger and more inclusive law of love and forgiveness. Sins may be forgiven. By the divine love, ever working its miracles, their consequences even may be removed, "so far as the East is from the West." It would be an incomplete philosophy indeed, and one chilling to the spirit, to suppose for one

instant that human life was merely worked out on mathematical formulas or statistical records. The deepest and most universal truth in all the heavens and in all the universes is the truth of the divine forgiveness of sins. The truth of the infinite tenderness and the Infinite Love! The power that is given more freely than we can ask from the Holy Ghost, the Comforter! The karmic law is thus aided, reinforced, surrounded by, and immersed in this marvellous restoration of love and forgiveness. Even in the human relations on earth,

Love scarce is love that never knows  
The sweetness of forgiving.

No call of the spirit ever fails of response. The spirit of truth and light illumines the mind and the heart; it guides man in the right path; it helps him to find his way undismayed through perplexities; it grants him the heavenly vision. We commit our souls ~~and~~ bodies, entirely, immeasurably, to the divine service! And through this committal the Holy Spirit pours the infinite treasures of love into the hearts of men.

By the law of cause and effect alone, man could never attain to the ultimate blessedness. Could

he, by any possibility, so work out his own salvation as to achieve sinless perfection, complete detachment from materiality, save by the miracle of grace? It is true that the creative agencies of the life immortal are something to be gained by a series of achievements; they are not showered upon him who is dead and unresponsive to them, because, by a divine law, they cannot be; but more abundantly than man can ask or ever dream are they freely given to him who will turn to the Lord and live! From selfishness to service — this is the path. Treading this path, does one come into receptive relation to the divine order.

Thus, only, does he live in the Immortal. For immortality is not a condition of time, to be approached only by the change we call death. So far as man lives the diviner life from day to day — and there are comparatively few who do not endeavor and also achieve an increasing degree of the divine life, — he lives in immortality. The enemy of spiritual vision, that which blinds the eye to the glories that might be revealed, is materialism. And this materialism is a matter of thought, of trend of feeling, not the living of the outer and essential life of the physical world. "With what body do they come?" we ask.

They come in even more celestial guise. They come, our beloved who have vanished from mortal sight, in the form of all tenderness and faithfulness in common service; in all channels of ordinary human helpfulness in the smallest things.

Sometimes in sudden light from other eyes;

Sometimes in breaking bread; in touch; in tone;  
Presences of the way; voice of new skies, —

Lo! we have felt and known.

Immortality may be deepened or lessened. It is within one's personal conduct of his inner thought. Eternal life is a still more celestial degree and opens only to a higher development. A man achieves *immortality*, in its increasing sense, by living in immortal energies. He enters into *eternal life* in the far onward progress of the spirit toward celestial realms. It is perhaps this that Saint Teresa termed the "orison of union." It is the mystic union with the Christ. And the fruit of this union is power. It is intimately associated with joy, assurance, triumph. It is an intellectual illumination and even a transfiguration of personal appearance. It is a new birth. It is the entrance on a realization of the ethereal universe. When Jesus

said, "All power is given to me in heaven and on earth," it is out of this consciousness that He spoke.

There is a distinction to be made too, between immortality and eternal life. The former is inherent in the very nature of man. The latter is the great spiritual achievement and is God's crowning gift.

This supreme truth is something to be borne in the consciousness, and it forever proves an element that carries the consciousness on to a higher stage.

The three degrees of consciousness are noted as the simple, the self, and the cosmic consciousness. Humanity is now for the most part in the second stage. But the cosmic consciousness, though supernormal from the standpoint of the present plane, is entirely normal from the higher plane to which human life is advancing. "The simple truth is that on earth are already the first faint beginnings of another race, who walk the earth with us, who breathe the same air, yet, at the same time walking another earth and breathing another air, which is our spiritual life, as its absence would be spiritual death. It is this new race which will, in the near future,

occupy and possess the earth." This "new race" simply means that which mankind is now in process of becoming by the rapid advance of spiritual evolution. It is the race of the super-man. It is that order of life which has always, to some degree, been revealed by the exceptional personalities of every age. It is this loftier atmosphere that clothes desire with power. The author of "Light on the Path" (Mabel Collins), a book that is at once a vision and an illumination, counsels, "Kill out desire." There is an occult sense in which this is the purest ideal; but in the general life, desire is not so much to be extinguished as it is to be exalted and purified. The desire that seeks only material gratification is a corrosive element that eats away all the fine gold of life. Our desires keep pace with our aspirations. But desire in the sense of longing and ardor for a given thing is good if the thing it longs for is good. The creative agencies of spiritual life are in man's own hands. His present experiences are those which his past desires, aims, and aspirations have called into being. If they are unlovely, if hedged about with difficulties and with infelicitous conditions, let him not despair. As he has determined this

present by causes that he has himself set up, so he may determine his future by better causes that he will now set up. Discard the order of thought and purpose that have resulted disastrously and begin to lead a new life, one more rich in prayer and aspiration, that shall build up the future by a new order of elements. As one has unmade his life, so he may remake it. If he has been selfish and unjust, let him reverse this. Let him seek every channel for the loftier life. Serenity and patience and faith shall create for him a new environment. He shall dwell in a spiritual house noble and fair. Things that are dark and difficult to-day shall be bright and easy to-morrow.

“Be not discouraged; keep on! there are divine things well enveloped!”

Conditions are plastic to power. And power is to be sought (and gained) from the diviner realm.

This power must not be applied to selfish purposes. If it should be so applied, it turns upon its possessor like an enemy. Love, in the larger sense, is the supreme law. When life is amenable to love, man is admitted to the intense and the enchanting activities of the higher plane.

If temptation comes to use this power for mere personal supremacy and for selfish ends, its peculiar danger must be realized and resisted. Otherwise one is plunging headlong to spiritual danger and downfall. Such temptations are a prototype of those that beset even Jesus in the wilderness, yet which held no allurement for Him, but only repelled with their appalling nature which He so well understood. All the kingdoms of the earth may reveal themselves to man to allure him from the true path; but he who knows the law remains true to the vision. With fidelity to the power, a fidelity strengthened by encountering and resisting temptation, come wisdom and goodness. The man breathes a purer atmosphere. And that which he has conquered and thrust behind will never assail him again. The achievement is a milestone on the heavenly journey. He has entered into the richness of life. His nature is now taken possession of by this invincible strength of the spiritual forces. The very longing to consecrate life to nobler purposes seems to result in a consciousness of the special care of God. Then does one enter into a more complete comprehension of the assurance, "Ye shall receive power when the



Holy Spirit is come upon you, and ye shall be my witnesses." The Holy Spirit comes upon him who has absolutely consecrated his own spirit to the divine forces. It requires no ceremonial, no ritual, no aid, even of priest or prophet. After this there can be no yielding to selfish temptations. "To do good" becomes not only a religion, but the natural impulse as well. It is not merely a duty, but a duty invested with joy. Duty is thus merged in privilege. Before a man can live, in the sense of life itself as differentiated from mere existence, the law of the spirit must become the supreme law of his personal life. Such transition as this may be effected within a moment. To "turn to the Lord and live" may be the conscious choice of an instant; while to continue unswerving in the upward way, is a matter for a lifetime. Perfection is not achieved by a miracle flash, but the turning to it as the fixed ideal may be the work of one of these miracle moments in life. Peace and serenity replace perplexity and anxieties; there is vision instead of narrow limitations beyond which man cannot see; there is power for service, which invests the daily experiences with zest and charm. The isolated life is not the life

of an ideal spirituality: the diviner order of life is only to be found in activity, in useful relations with the great companions.

Allons ! after the Great Companions ! and to belong to them !

They too are on the road ! they are the swift and majestic men ; they are the greatest women.

The existence of a larger consciousness than that which we commonly conceive is so universally recognized that no argument is required. The manifestation of this consciousness is conditioned by the degree of evolution attained by the individual. It is this apparently unlimited inner consciousness that furnishes the base for the phenomena known as autosuggestion. Practically, there are no known limits to that power. To the realm of the larger consciousness, the activity summoned by suggestion repairs, to discover that which is desired. The larger consciousness is a spiritual storehouse which the autosuggestion explores. And this autosuggestion, inspired to activities by the will, compasses achievements beyond computation. These indicate that man has within himself faculties whose scope and energy are far beyond

his comprehension. The gaining of higher planes liberates these faculties to full play on the plane of life to which they belong. The liberation of these powers exalts life to a new and a fairer atmosphere; to a realm of wisdom and of love which transform the outer conditions and the inward experience. Then does man come into the use of this new set of faculties, of comprehensions that belong to this larger consciousness. In this loftier region images of glorious thought and incalculable significance abound. Service becomes the luxury of life; harmony and beauty create the environment. Great intellectual strength is brought to bear. The creative energies hold sway. Great inventions, great artistic accomplishments, originate on this plane.

The reader who may accept this speculative truth to a greater or a less degree will question, and not unnaturally, how this plane is to be gained? Granted that it is the plane where the larger consciousness has full play, how is it to be achieved? The poet may bid man hitch his wagon to a star; but where, asks the individual, is the wagon — and where is the line that shall connect it with the star shining brilliantly in the

heavens? The wagon is typical of the purposes of life; the line that shall connect it with the star is that beam formed of aspiration and of will. As Cicero stated, the soul possesses a marvellous power. If by aspiration and prayer and duties fulfilled and service nobly done, man may more closely relate his lower and finite consciousness to this larger and infinite realm of consciousness, then do all vision, all resistless energies, all enlightenment take form and appear as beneficent agencies on the mental plane. It is by close relation to this higher consciousness that such works as those of Graham Bell, Edison, Marconi, come into expression.

The spiritualization of life is not achieved by forsaking the duties of life. It is by the more complete acceptance and the more genuine fulfillment of them that the higher spirituality is attained. The life of the spirit may be lived, while yet in the physical body and in the physical world, to so wonderful a degree that a vast number of latent forces may be liberated and utilized. The evolution of the natural world keeps pace with the higher and constantly advancing evolution of the spirit. Life becomes an entrancing experience and a component part

of the Adventure Beautiful. For this adventure is a beginning rather than an end. It doth not yet appear what we shall be.

Is it not, then, apparent that the mere detail of psychic communication is but an incident in this vast and measureless question of the spiritual life, which is the unending evolutionary progress? The real concern is the following of the divine example; the resting in perfect confidence upon the sustaining power of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. "Let us not imagine," said Channing, "that the usefulness of man is finished at death. Then rather does it begin. Death has expanded his powers. It enables him to coöperate with higher communities."

Let one not interpose between his friends in the Unseen and himself the barrier of distrust. To lift up the heart to companion them in spirit by becoming sharers of their joy and freedom; to invite and to welcome their approach; to enter into the divine realities — thus does one best receive that all-conquering energy, that all-loving and invincible power that sets toward humanity in an unceasing and resistless current from the Divine Father, even the Holy Ghost, the Comforter!















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